HISTORY

OF THE

TAMIL PROSE LITERATURE.

BY

V. S. CHENGALVARAYA PILLAI, B. A.

PRINTED AT THE MEMORIAL PRESS, MADRAS.

1904.

ERRATA.

Page 4, line 4, read *to say* for *in saying*.
,, 16, ,, 21, read எழீஇ for எழிஇ
,, 16, ,, 32, read *e. g.* for *for e. g.*
,, 23, ,, 28, read *Province* for *Prvince*
,, 24, ,, 33, read *disciple* for *son*
,, 28, ,, 16, read *Nachchinarkkiniyar* for *Nachhi-narkkiniyar.*
,, 53, ,, 18, read *bad* for *false.*

CONTENTS.

PAGE.

Introduction 1

CHAPTER I.

A. The Dearth of Tamil Prose. 5
B. The Utility of Tamil Prose. 7
C. The Province of Tamil Prose. 8

CHAPTER II.

THE HISTORY OF THE TAMIL PROSE LITERATURE.

Early Period-Before 200 A. D. 14
Medieval Period. (1) A D. 200–A. D. 600 22
(2) A. D. 600–A. D. 1500 23
Modern Period-1500 A. D. –X 33

CHAPTER III.

The Leading Characteristics of the Tamil Prose Diction & conclusion 48
Illustration.
Addenda.

HISTORY

OF THE

TAMIL PROSE LITERATURE.

INTRODUCTION.

Successful researches are being carried out by eminent Tamil Scholars to ascertain the chronological history of the development of Tamil Literature. To trace the history of the Tamil Prose Literature with the help of scanty historical records, meagre internal evidence from ancient, medieval and modern Tamil works is by no means easy. The bright sky of ancient Tamil Literature is hidden from our view by the cloudy overcast of want of historic spirit among the Tamilians. What the British Pindar says of the vast ocean that "Full many a gem of purest ray serene, The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear" may with equal appropriateness be said about the ocean of Tamil Literature. And with the occasional but very valuable aids that we derive from Epigraphists and Archæologists, we have been able to descry now and then glimpses of the gems of Tamil Literature; and it is a very noteworthy fact that both the oceans have a blemish in common; both of them do not suit the public taste, the one by the absence of fresh sweet water and the other by the absence of readable Prose works; the former stain is not within the capacity of human powers to be removed; but the latter one is not so; proper exhortation to the educated Tamil students can, though not in the near future, at no long time to come, make up this

sad want (1). This explains why the subject 'The Tamil Prose Literature' is here taken up for our dissertation. At a time when the want of Tamil Prose is being so much felt, a dissertation on that subject will not be altogether unwelcome. It is true that the field and scope of Tamil Prose are comparatively insignificant when considered side by side with those of Tamil Poetry; yet, Tamil Prose considered by itself is a good subject and in fact a pretty long subject for a dissertation. (2) "Little need be said," writes Prof. Minto, "to justify taking up Prose by itself. In criticising Poetry we are met by very different considerations from those that occur in the other kinds of composition. What is more, many people not particularly interested in Poetry are anxious for practical purposes to have a good knowledge of Prose style; and when Prose and Poetry are discussed in the same volume, Prose is generally sacrificed to Poetry." These remarks of Prof. Minto apply with greater force and truth, when we take the Tamil Prose Literature into consideration. The scantiness of Tamil Prose is a known fact. Hence (1) it is one of the first duties of a Tamil Student to work for the rapid increase of the Prose sphere; there are, it is true, other duties equally important. (2) The publication of old works is a very important and at the same time a responsible duty. Arumukha Navalar and Damodaram Pillai did great good to the Literature by their publication of old classics and other works; the post of honour in this field rightly belongs also to Pandit V. Saminadha Aiyar. His editions of chintamani, Silappatikaram, Manimekalai &c, are one and all excellent and he richly deserves the high encomiums poured on him from every quarter. (3) "M. Vinson in noticing the Pandit's edition of chilappadikaram talks of 'sa science profonde, de son zele infatigable et de son talent experimente'' (his profound

(1) Vide Addendum I.

(2) Minto's Prose Literature: Preface.

(3) The Malabar Quarterly Review. Mar, 1904.

knowledge is seen in his indefatigable zeal and talent.) (3) The long neglected field of the Tamil Drama has been recently taken up by scholars well acquainted with the Literature of the East and that of the West, with the result, that in the short space of a decade more than twenty dramas of high merit have been published ; of these 'Manònmaniyam' and 'Kalavathi, an original drama' deserve high appreciation. (4) Biographies and Prose translations from select English works are also necessary. (1) "Histories describing hard stern facts and stories relating to the actual realities of life have yet to be clothed in forms suited to modern times." And (5) Tamil Scholars should help the Epigraphists in their praiseworthy endeavours. The study of Epigraphy has done immense good by throwing light on the dark periods of mediæval and modern history. "The rise in the study of Epigraphy during the last twenty years has, indeed, already yielded some direct information of importance, about the literary and religious history of India, by fixing the date of some of the later poets as well as by throwing light on religious systems and whole classes of literature."(2) The age of Tiru Gnana Sambandhar, for instance, was fixed to be the early years of the 7th century A.D. only with the aid of archæological researches.

We shall here give an instance where Epigraphy helps in corroborating a date already known. Niramba Alagia Desikar, the author of Setu-puranam lived towards the close of the Sixteenth century. The basis for placing his age there, is the fact that he was the teacher of Ati-vira-Rama; (3) this poet-king came to the throne in 1565 A.D. We have another evidence which gives us the same date. Samban-

---

(1) Vide "Introduction to 'Akbar.'"

(2) Vide Arthur A. Macdonell's 'History of Sanskrit Literature.' p.10.

(3) Vide Dr. Caldwell's Comparative Grammar p. 145.

dha Munivar, the author of Tiruvarur Puranam, was (1) the disciple of Niramba Alagiar. He gives 1514 Saka (1592 A.D) as the date of having produced his work before a learned assembly at Tiruvarur. From this we are enabled in saying that Ati-Vira-Rama and Sambandha Munivar were contemporaries; further, in the very last sentence of his Setu-Puranam, Niramba Alagiar refers to a sage called (2) Rama Natha Munivar.

Who was this Ramanatha Munivar? When did he live? As his name is mentioned at the very close of the great work, he must have been, very probably, the teacher or Guru of Niramba Alagiar. We are glad to find definite information about this sage given in Dr. Burgess's 'Archæological survey of Southern India.(3) There it is said that "in the Saka year 1520 (1598 A. D) the learned sage Ramanatha built the victorious Adal-mandapam of the Rameswarem temple".(4) He is also referred to as 'the prince of sages who is well versed in all the rites and Agamas of the Saiva

---

(1)"எங்கள் குருநிரம்ப வழகனெனுங் குணக்குன்றைத் துதித்தி றைஞ்சிக்குறித்து வாழ்வாம்".

"பார்புகழ் சகாப்த மாயிரத் தைஞ்ஞூற்றுப் பதினான்காகிய பிங்கலப்பே ராண்டிற் சம்பந்த னரங்கேற்றினனே" Arûr Puranam pp. 5, 7

(2)"மாதவர்கண் மிகவாழ்க இராமநாத மாமுனிவ னீடூழிவாழ்க மாந்தர்." vide Setu Puranam. p. 335.

(3) Vol. IV. page 58.

(4) 'செல்கண்ட வாரி யிலங்கேசன் வெம்பழி தீரமுன்னாள்
மால்கண்ட கோயி லிராமீச ராடல்செய்ம் மண்டபத்தை
நூல்கண்ட நற்சக ணாயிரத் தோடைந்து நூற்றிருபான்
மேல்கண்ட நாளின் முனிராம நாதன் விதித்தனனே.

also, 'தொண்டர்
குற்றங் கடிந்த வராம நாயகர் கோயிலன்பான்
முற்றுந் தவங்கள் புரிராம நாதன் முடித்தனனே.'

system'. Hence we understand that Ramanatha Munivar was a sage and scholar of the age of Ati-Vira-Rama Pandiyan. From the above facts, we arrive at the conclusion that the sage Ramanatha, the poet and commentator Niramba Alagiar, the poet-king Ati-Vira-Rama, his brother and poet Vara-tunga-Rama and the poet Sambandha Munivar were all contemporaries who lived in the closing years of the sixteenth century. The above fact illustrates the value of Epigraphical researches.

Now, we have seen what the chief duties of the Tamil Student are. If he walks in this path of duty without swerving and renders service to his literature by making up its wants, he shall reap the fruit of his noble endeavours in as much as 'the path of duty is the way to glory.'

CHAPTER I.

A. The Dearth of Tamil Prose—B. The utility of Tamil Prose, C. The Province of Tamil Prose.

A. The Dearth of Tamil Prose :

The dearth of the Tamil Prose Literature strikes us all the more clearly when we just consider how vast a scope of literature, Tamil Poetry has been covering. "Whatever else she may have wanted" says Dr. Miller, "India has never wanted Poetry" and this is more true of Southern India', (especially of the Tamil Literature), 'than any other part of this vast continent'.(1) Grammars, dictionaries, biographies, prefaces, inscriptions, treatises on medicine, astrology, astronomy, metaphysical and moral questions were invariably written in metre, so that there was practically no prose. The only branch of Literature where we see the prose style much employed has been that of the learned commentaries on ancient works. Hence, the general truth that in all literature Poetry precedes Prose holds

(1) Vide 'Introduction to Akbar'

good in the case of the Tamil Literature too. " (1) Music and Rhyme are among the earliest pleasures of the child and in the History of Literature Poetry precedes Prose."(2) "The metrical form of expressions is the oldest form of literary language that exists. In the early stages of society it is used for two reasons, first, because, as writing has not been invented it is the only way of preserving memorable thoughts and secondly because in primitive times what may be called the poetical or ideal method of conceiving nature predominates over the scientific method. Imagination is then stronger than reason and the poet is at once the story-teller, the theologian, the historian, and the natural philosopher of Society." The scientific spirit was something foreign to the Tamilians. The poetical method of conceiving Nature was the main characteristic of the ancient Tamil Poetry. Tamil Poetry has been in existence from the very beginning of the Christian era ; whereas Tamil Prose puts in its appearance only from the time of Constantius Beschi at best (1740 A.D).

The absence of paper and printing also accounts for the dearth of Prose-writings. To write long prose works on palmyra leaves would be very tedious and it is no wonder that our forefathers did not think it worth while to waste their time in writing stories or tales in prose. The difficulty of the writing materials necessitated them to seek after compression of expression; and this they found in poetry. This same difficulty accounts for the brevity and terseness of the commentaries on the poetical works. Adiyárkku nallar, after writing an elaborate annotation on the first two lines of the Padhigam of Silappatikaram says(3) 'Lest the commentary should get too long, I refrain from annotating the whole book in this elaborate fashion.' If our

---

(1) R. W. Emerson's Poetry and Imagination. p. 439.

(2) Courthope's 'Life in Poetry and Law in Taste'.

(3) Padhigam, Silappatikáram. p 17.

ancient authors had had the same conveniences that we have now, surely, we would now be in possession of elaborate commentaries and a good number of prose works.

B. *The Utility of Tamil Prose*:

For practical purposes Proso is to be preferred to Poetry. Most of the Tamil scholars wasted their time and energy in the composition of difficult forms of poetry. The number of such forms of composition is innumerable. One of the most difficult of such compositions is what is called the Nirottaga Yamaga Andhadi. This is a curious sort of composition fettered by hard rules; it must have all the characteristics of a Yamaga Andhadi; and in addition to these, its special characteristic must be noticed. The lips of the reader should not come in contact with each other, when he reads it, i.e., the letters ப, ம, வ, உ, ஒ must be absent. Only very great poets should try this experiment. The great Poet Sivaprakasar has composed one Andhadi of this kind, called (1) '*திருச் செந்தி னிரோட்டக யமக வந்தாதி*." Even now some of the Tamil Pandits (who have not had the influence of Western Culture) rack their brains in the composition of '*மிறைக்கவி*.' They might with better beneficial results use their time and energy in the composition of Prose works; and thus create a liking in the minds of the Tamil speaking public for their mother-tongue. The chief reason for the neglect of Tamil is the absence of Prose works. Our Tamil Literature may be compared to a town where only gold vases are sold and where ordinary earthenware is absent in as much as it has excellent poetry and is destitute of ordinary prose.(2) It is the practical utility of Tamil Prose that

---

(1) Here is one stanza from this Andhadi.

'*கணைக்காக நாய்கடின் காய நிலையெனக் கன்னியென்ன*
கணைக்காக நானிலந் தெய்த்தே னெழிற்செந்திற் கந்தநெற்றிக்
கணைக்காக னார்தந்த நின்றனை யேயினிக் காதலினாற்
கணைக்காக னரிகர்த் தேயழி யங்கத்தின் காதலற்றே.' (உ-அ)

(2) Vide Addendum II.

should be borne in mind ; and every real patron of his literature must work towards its development.

C. The Province of Tamil Prose :

It is of essential importance to consider this question, especially, so far as our Tamil Prose Literature is concerned There are pieces of old prose writings which do not have the essential elements of prose. Now, the question arises 'what is prose?' The ordinary definition of Prose is 'the common language of men unconfined to poetical measures.' In this sense, of course, almost all our old prose writings are no prose; for example, let us examine the prose passages in the ancient epic Silappatikaram; the rules of scansion can very well be applied and they can be brought under the general heading of the Tamil metre called 'Asiriappa;' the definition which Coleridge gives of Prose may serve our purpose here. Coleridge has 'I wish our clever young poets would remember my homely definitions of Prose and Poetry, that prose is 'words in their best order,' poetry 'the best words in their best order." (1) "As the medium in which the Poet works is language, execution in his case is the arrangement of the best words in the best order, the best order being in all but a few anomalous cases, a rhythmical one. The technical laws of verse, however, deal only with 'the best order.' There remain as a part of execution 'the best words.' This section of the definition covers all the intellectual propriety, the moral passion, the verbal felicity, the myriad charms and graces of which 'the best order' is but the vehicle." Now applying this definition to our ancient prose, we may safely assert that it comes under the compass of Prose; for, there we find 'words in their best order' but not 'best words in their best order.' Hence, Prose passages where we discern only poetic flow are all to be included in the Province of Prose. It is noticeable that even the prose writings in the commentaries have always

(1) Chambers's Encyclopædia. Vol. VIII. P. 262.

a tinge of poetic flow in them; and, in fact, the Tamil writers ancient as well as modern have had a great taste for this peculiar style and most of the commentators including (1) the commentator on Erayanar Agapporul, (2) Nachchinarkkiniyar, (3) Parimèlalagar, & (4) Adiyarkku Nallar very often indulged in making use of this peculiar style. This style, which is peculiar to Tamil, does not in any way mar the excellence of good prose; on the other hand, our pleasure is enhanced when we read passages which have the balanced poetic flow. It is noticeable that this poetic flow does not suit the English Language; and passages, which have poetic flow in them, are not much appreciated by English Writers. "The rhythm of prose must, in order to be good of its species, be unrecurrent. No greater fault can be committed in prose than the intentional or even accidental introduction of passages which can be read as verse, that is, as recurrent rhythm."(5)

---

(1) The style of the Agapporul commentary has a classic poetic flow. eg P. 27 'கருங்குழற் கற்றை மருங்கிருத்தி அளகமுநுதலுந் தகைபெற நீவி, ஆகமுந் தோளும் அணிபெறத் தைவந்து, குளிர்ப்பக் கூறித் தளிர்ப்ப முயங்கி &c.,

(2) Nachchinarkkiniyar's style has a simple and fine poetic flow. பறந்து செல்லுஞ் செலவிலை தருக்கின;பரத்தலை யுடைய போரிலே திரிவன.' P. 605, Chintamani.

(3) The terse style of Parimelalagar has also the poetic flow. He defines கூடாநட்பு thus; 'அஃதாவது, பகைமையா னகத்தாற் கூடாதிருந்தே, தமக்கு வாய்க்கு மிடம்பெறுந் துணையும் புறத்தாற் கூடி யொழுகுவார் நட்பு.'

(4) Adiyárkku Nallar's style has much poetic flow in it. His notes on the first two lines of the Padhigam of Silappatikaram have extreme poetic flow. Pandit Saminatha Aiyar has noted this in his preface (P. 12,) 'இவருடைய உரைநடை சிற்சில விடத்து எதுகை மோனை முதலிய வற்றோடுகூடி இனிய சுவை பயந்து செய்யு ணடையாக வமைந்துள்ளது'.

(5) Chambers's Encyclopaedia. Vol. VIII. p. 259.

The Grammar Sútram which defines the province of Prose is put in the Seyyul Iyal of Tolkappiyam. How could a sutram which defines the province of *Prose* have found a place in the *Seyyul Iyal* of Tolkappiyam? This question naturally leads us to examine the original meaning of the word 'Seyyul.'

History of the word 'செய்யுள்':—The first meaning of the word 'செய்யுள்' (Seyyul) is to be got from its derivation. (1) 'Seyyul' means that which is made or composed; hence a composition or work. This primeval meaning of the word 'Seyyul' may also be noticed in the expression 'உரையிடையிட்ட பாட்டுடைச் செய்யுள்' applied to such works as Perundévanar Bharatam and Silappatikaram. If we give 'Seyyul' the present meaning of Páttu (பாட்டு) poetry, பாட்டுடைச் செய்யுள் makes no sense. உரை is prose, பாட்டு is poetry, and செய்யுள் is composition ; hence, உரை யிடையிட்ட பாட்டுடைச் செய்யுள் means 'composition in which the poems are interspersed here and there with prose, i. e. poetical composition in which prose is intermixed. That 'Seyyul' meant only written composition, without regard to its quality, may also be noticed from the old use of such expressions as (2) பாட்டுடைச் செய்யுள், உரைச் செய்யுள் (prose composition)

---

(1) It has been recently found out that the printed commentary on the Seyyul Iyal of Tolkappiyam is Perasiriyar's, not Nachchinarkkiniyar's, as was hitherto believed. i. Vide Perasiriyar's commentary, Seyyul Iyal, P. 687, [L. 16] Tolkappiyam, "பாய்த்துள் விக்குள் என்றாற்போலச் செய்யுள் என்பதூஉந் தொழிற் பெயர்." ii. Note Ilakkana Vilakkam [P. 838. L. 27] செய்தலினாற் சொல்லுஞ் செய்யுளாதல் பெற்றாம். iii. Note Ilakkanakkottu Urai, pp. 90-1. உரை செய்யுளாமோ வெனின் "செய்யுளென்னுஞ் சொற்குப் பொருளோர்ந்துணர்க."

(2) Vide Silappatikaram, padhigam, 59-60. "சிலப்பதிகார மென்னும் பெயரால், நாட்டுதும் யாமோர் பாட்டுடைச்செய்யுள்". Vide P. 3, சிலப்பதிகார அரும்பதவுரை, பாட்டுடைச் செய்யுள் = உருவாகிய பாட்டுக்களையுடைய காவியம்.

and (1) சூத்திரச் செய்யுள் (grammar sutrams). Hence, the original meaning of the term 'உரைச்செய்யுள்,' applied to prose, was only 'prose composition' not prose-poetry.

Now, let us examine the place given to Prose in the Tamil Grammars. First, let us begin with the Tolkappiyam. A study of the Seyyul Iyal reveals to us that Tolkappiyar divides Seyyul (all compositions) into two main divisions, (i) Compositions where all the requisite rules (the number of feet &c.) of metre are strictly observed and (ii) Compositions where the number of feet is not limited.(2) Under the latter division are included Prose, Commentaries, Sutrams &c. The commentator on Seyyul Iyal (Pérasiryar) distinctly says that Sutrams are not Pattu ;(3) whereas he scruples not to use the expression சூத்திரச் செய்யுள்.(1) Hence we clearly see that the term Seyyul is greater in denotation, and less in connotation than the term Pattu, i e, the term Seyyul (composition) is the genus and the terms Pattu (poetry), Urai (prose) and Nool (Sutrams) are all its species: and "a genus has no meaning apart from the two or more species into which it is divided; nor has a species apart from the containing genus."(4) And this justifies the use of the expressions பாட்டிடைச் செய்யுள், உரைச்செய்யுள் &c.

But the word 'Seyyul' began to narrow in its meaning and it is one of those cases where specialisation in meaning has taken place. Poetry being the most difficult of compositions, the term 'Seyyul' came to be restricted to poetry alone.

---

(1) Vide p. 739. Porul Adikaram, Tolk.

(2) Vide Illustration (at the close of the dissertation.)

(3) 'சூத்திரம் பாட்டெனப் படாவோவெனின் படா; பாட்டும் உரையும்நூலும் என வேறோதினமையின்'. P. 742 L. 32-3. Porul Adhikaram, Tolk.

(4) Welton's Logic. Vol. I. p. 81.

The author of Vira Soliyam includes under 'Seyyul' both Poetry and Prose; and, as he chiefly followed the rules of Sanskrit grammar he gives the names of பத்தியம் (Padyam) and கத்தியம் (gadyam) to Pattu and Urai respectively. He says,

"பத்தியங் கத்திய மென்றிரண் டாஞ்செய்யுள் பத்தியமே
லெத்திய பாதங்க ளால்வந் தியலு மெனமொழிந்த
கத்தியங் கட்டுரை செய்யுளின் போலி கலந்தவற்ரு
டொத்தியல் கின்றமை யாலொன்று தாமு முரைத்தனரே."(1)

It is noticeable here that the word 'Seyyul' is first used in the original sense of Composition and secondly in the narrowed sense of Poetry. This shows that the Vira Soliyam age marks the transition stage in the meaning of 'Seyyul.'

The next stage reveals that 'Seyyul' almost lost its original meaning. Vaidyanatha Désikar, the author of Ilakkana vilakkam follows the plan of Tolkappiyar and he speaks of Prose in the very last sutram of Seyyul Iyal. Since he gives a place for Prose in the chapter on Seyyul, we are led to think that the 'Seyyul' in Seyyul Iyal has its original sense, viz, composition. But his son Tyagaraja Desikar, the writer of Pattiyal (which only means 'the chapter dealing with the several kinds of Poetry') wrongly took உரைச் செய்யுள் to be the equivalent of prose-poetry and he speaks of the province of prose in his Pattiyal. Properly speaking the 143rd. Sutram 'பாட்டிடை வைத்த குறிப்பினுனும்' of Pattiyal (Ilakkana vilakkam) ought to have found a place in the preceding chapter (Seyyul Iyal.)

The acute brain of Œsana Desikar, the writer ef Ilakkanakkottu clearly perceives that 'Seyyul' has narrowed in its meaning. In the last sutram of his Ilakkanakkottu he discusses the question how Prose and Sutrams can be called 'Seyyul.' A keen study of his own commentary on his sutram will clearly reveal to us that he tries to reconcile the original

(1) Viraspliyam. Yáppuppadalam,. 6.

meaning of Seyyul with the narrowed meaning; in fact, he argues that Prose is 'Seyyul' in both its meanings. This is the line of his argument. (1) The use of the term உரைச் செய்யுள் in the sense of 'Prose composition' is justifiable since we have the sanction of usage and since the very derivation of the word 'Seyyul' allows its usage. (2) The use of the term உரைச் செய்யுள் in the sense of 'Prose-poetry' is allowable since prose passages are invariably written with the poetic flow.

During Beschi's time (1730 A. D.) the present notion that Seyyul and Pattu are equivalent crept in. In the commentary on sutram 250 of Tonnul Vilakkam we notice that gadyam or prose is considered to be prose-poetry. Hence it is that the work Konrai-Vendhan (கொன்றை வேந்தன்) is given as an example of gadyam work.(3) Since Beschi's time, 'Seyyul' has always been used in its narrow sense of 'Poetry;' The writer of the History of the Tamil Language says 'It is a pity that Prose should thus be regarded as a kind of Poetry; it is this crooked notion that hinders the free development of the Tamil Prose Literature.' (4) But we have noticed, by a careful inquiry into the meaning

---

(1) 'உரைச்செய்யுள் எனப் பலரும் ஆளுதலான்' உணர்க; 'செய்யுளென்னுஞ் சொற்குப் பொருளோர்ந்து முணர்க.' Notes on Sutram 131. Ilakkanakkottu.

(2) 'உரை செய்யுளாமோ வெனின், "விதித்தன செய்தலும் விலக்கியன வொழிதலும்," "பொருப்பு வில்லிபால் விருப்ப மிலரே" என வாசகங்களைச் செய்யுளுருப்புத் தோன்ற எழுதலாற்'செய்யுளாமென்க. Notes on Sutram 131, Ilakkanakkottu.

(3) "இலக்கணஞ் சிதையினு மிலக்கணப் பாவினடையோ டொப்ப வருவன வெல்லாங் கத்திய மெனப்படும். ஆகையிற் 'கொன்றை வேந்தன்' முதலாயின கத்தியமெனக் கண்டுணர்க." P. 188. Sutram 250. Tonnul Vilakkam.

(4) History of the Tamil Language, P 144, L. 16

of the word 'Seyyul,' that the term 'உரைச்செய்யுள்' originally meant 'Prose Composition,' that it did possess a separate sphere for itself as a species of composition, and that the confusion in the writings of the later writers was due to their not noticing the original meaning of the word 'Seyyul.' Since the word 'Seyyul' has now the definite meaning of 'Poetry', the term 'உரைச்செய்யுள்,' for 'Prose' has almost become obsolete. Anyhow, Prose has now begun to create a new sphere for itself and it is on the right lines of improvement.

——:o:——

CHAPTER II.

History Of The Tamil Prose Literature.

Early Period-Before 200 A. D:

The Tamil word for Prose is 'Urai-Nadai' (1)(உரைநடை) which means 'the speech on foot'; and it will be interesting to observe that the Latin expression 'Oratio pedestris' for Prose means also 'speech on foot', i. e. 'the language that walks and does not profess to fly'; and as this was the style that could possibly be used in writing commentaries, they were also given the name of 'Urai'; and Tamil Prose has had its origin mainly, if not solely, in

---

(1) 'உரைத்துப் போதலின் உரை'; நடத்தலின் 'நடை' The derivation of the word 'நடை' (style) strongly reminds us of the beautiful stanza of Kambar where he puns upon the two meanings of the word நடை viz. (gait and style). Sri Rama says to Hanúman that Sita's gait can be compared, rightly, only to the style of the great poet.

"பூவரு மழலை யன்னம் புனைமடப் பிடியென் றின்ன
தேவரு மருளத் தக்க செலவின வெனவுந் தேறேன்
பாவருங் கிழமைத் தொன்மைப் பருணிதர் தொடுத்த பத்தி
நாவருங் கிளவிச் செவ்வி நடைவரு நடைய னல்லோய்."

Kishkindakandam. Nadavitta Padalam. 64.

commentaries. We have no grounds for asserting that there were separate prose works before the beginning of the 17th century. That commentary was not the only province of prose in our ancient literature, we may boldly assert, for, prose was used in a particular species of composition, the characteristic feature of which is called 'Tonmai' (தொன்மை)-Narration of ancient story; and it almost corresponds to the Epic Poetry. The Tonmai composition, like the epic, "is one of the earliest poetical forms in which the primitive imagination has found expression."(1) The 238th sutram of Seyyul Iyal, Tolkappiyam defines its characteristics thus, "தொன்மை தானே, உரையொடு புணர்ந்த பழைமை மேற்றே." The Bháratam of Perundèvanar and Thagadur Yadrai are given as examples. Perundevanar Bháratam, Thahadúr Yádrai and Silappatikaram are the only three works where we have prose intermixed with poetry. "The epic poem treats of one great, complex action, in a grand style and with fulness of detail."(2) These main requisites of an epic are present in the above three Tamil works. Of these, we shall first notice the Bharatam of Perundevanar.

1. **Perundevanar's Bharatam** :—Perundevanar was one of the Sangam Poets. He was great both as a poet and as a prose-writer. Whenever a compilation of the stanzas on Agapporul or Purapporul was made, this author, it seems, was invariably asked to prefix his invocatory stanza. This shows that he was held in great respect by his colleagues of the Tamil Board both on account of his erudition as a scholar and his piety towards God. The first invocatory stanzas of Iyngurunûru (ஐங்குறுநூறு,) Agananuru, and Purananuru are Perundévanar's and they are addressed to Siva. His invocation in Narrinai(நற்றிணை)is to Vishnu, his address in Kuruntogai (குறுந்தொகை) is to Murugar, and his prayer in Bharatam is to Vinayakar.

(1) Chambers's Encyclopædia. P. 395.

(2) T. Arnold's 'History of English Literature', P. 484.

Besides Bháratám and the five invocatory stanzas, he was the author also of one stanza in Narrinai, one in Aganánùru, and one in Tiruvalluva màlai. His Bhàratam is also known by the name of Bhàrata Venba, as the major portion of the work consists of Venbas ;(1) there were also Agavals (1)and Prose. The commentary on the Tolkappiyam sutram on Tonmai reveals that in Perundèvanar's Bharatam there were intermixed choice prose passages. That Perundèvanar wrote nearly the whole of Bhàratam may be inferred from the stanzas (which Nachchinarkkiniyar quotes in his commentary on Purattinai Iyal) where we find descriptions of the later events of the Maha Bharata. The following Agaval from Bharatam is a graphic description of the horrid slaughter which Asvattàma committed on Dhrushta dhuimnan and the five sons of Pánchali.

"மறங்கெழு வேந்தன் குறங்கறுத் திட்டபின்
அருமறை யாசான் ஒருமகன் வெகுண்டு
பாண்டவர் வேர்முதல் கீண்டெறி சீற்றமோ
டிரவூ ரறியாது ... ...
... ...
தந்தையைத் தலையற வெறிந்தவ னிவனெனத்
துஞ்சிடத் தெழீஇக் குஞ்சி பற்றி
வடாது பாஞ்சால னெடுமுதற் புதல்வனைக்
கழுத்தெழத் திருகிப் பறித்த காலைக்
கோயிற் கம்பலை யூர்முழு துணர்த்தலிற்
றம்பியர் மூவரு மைம்பான் மருகரு
முடன்றமர் தொடங்கி யொருங்கு களத்தவிய
வாள்வாய்த்துப் பெயர்ந்த காலை யாள்வினைக்
கின்றே றிணிப்பிற ரில்லென." (2)

We see here that there is only a very small percentage of Sanskrit words; but in the prose passages found in the Bharatam Mss. extant now, we find that the style is replete with Sanskrit words and expressions; for e. g., we

(1) pp. 150, 151, 770. Porul Adhikáram. Tolk.

(2) P. 156. Ibid.

have, "இவ்வகை பேசிய அசரீரியாய ஆதித்ய பகவானும் அந்தர்த்தானஞ்செய்த பின்பு கன்னனுடைய தியாக சத்தியின்மகாநுபாவங் கண்டு தேவசாதிகளும் ஆச்சரியப்பட்டுப் புஷ்பவர்ஷம் பொழிந்தார்." That this is the prose style of a writer of the sangam age is absurd. We have to strongly doubt the genuineness of the Bhartam Mss. extant now. Surely there must have been wholesale interpolations. Judging from the style of the above stanza, we may safely assert that the prose passages also were written in a simple and classic style. Now, as regards the author, Nachchinàrkkiniyar always refers to him as Perundévanar. After he wrote the Bhàratam, he came to be called 'பாரதம் பாடிய பெருந்தேவனார்;' and this epithet serves to distinguish him from கவிசாகரப் பெருந்தேவனார் (Kavi Sákarap Perundèvanar) and the later Perundèvanar (the commentator on Vìra Sóliyam.) He was the first Tamil Poet that composed the Bhàratam in Tamil. That Perundévanar was a native of the Tondai-nadu, ever the famous land of the great, that his Bharatam, containing 12000 stanzas, was well appreciated by his colleagues of the Tamil Board we learn from the stanza of the Tondai-mandala-sathagam which says,

"சீருறும் பாடல்பன் னீரா யிரமுஞ் செழுந்தமிழ்க்கு
வீரர்தஞ் சங்கப் பலகையி லேற்றிய வித்தகனார்
பாரதம் பாடும் பெருந்தேவர் வாழும் பழம்பதிகாண்
மாருதம் பூவின் மணம்வீ சிடுந்தொண்டை மண்டலமே."

2. **The Thagadur Yadrai** (தகடூர் யாத்திரை) : Thagadùr yàdrai was not the work of a single author. It is the product of the conjoint authorship of at least two authors (1) Pon mudiyar(1) and(2)Arisirkkirar.(1) The work consists of a graphic description of the campaign of Cheraman('சேரமான் தகடூரெறிந்த பெருஞ்சேர லிரும்பொறை') against Adiyaman, the feudatory king of Thagadur and patron of the 'Dravidian Sappho' Auvvayar. Adiyaman remained within

(1) P. 138. Purattinai Iyal. Tolk. Vide Nachchinarkkiniyar's notes to Puruttinai sutrams 8-12.

the precincts of his fortress at Thagadur, when Chéraman advanced against him with a mighty force;(1) and, at the end, Adiyaman was completely routed by Chèramau.(2) Ponmudiyar(3) and Arisirkkirar(3) were intimate friends; both were true poets;Ponmudiyar describes certain portions of the expedition, while Arisirkkirar takes up certain other portions. The description of the city of Thagadur is Ponmudiyar's.(4) There are 3 stanzas of Ponmudiyar's in Puranánuru and one in Tiruvalluva màlai. Arisirkkirar was the author of the 8th decade of the பதிற்றுப்பத்து; there are also 7 stanzas in Purananuru and one in Tiruvalluva màlai, written by him.

The city of Thagadur: " Mr. V. Kanakasabhai Pillai, has identified Thagadur with Dharmapuri, the head-quarters of a Taluka in the Salem District.(5) This statement is corroborated by two Chola inscriptions (Nos. 307 and 308 of 1901) in the Mallikarjuna temple at Dharmapuri, according to which Tagadùr, the modern Dharmapuri was the chief town of Tagadur-nádu, a sub-division of the Ganga country (ganga-nadu), a district of Nigarili-Sola-Mandalam."(6) There is another village named Tagaduru in the Nanjana Gudu Taluka of the Mysore District. Sundara-

---

(1) P. 125 Porul Adhikaram. Tolk. "சேரமான் செல்வுழித் தகடூரிடை அதிகமான் இருந்ததாம்."

(2) Patirruppatta, 8th. Decade.

(3) " Arisil-kilár (A. D. 110-140). Several of his stanzas occur also in the Thagadur yathirai. "Pon-Mudiyar (A. D. 110-140) a war bard who accompanied the army of the Chera king Perum-Cheral-Irum Porai, when it marched against Thagadúr. His verses are full of martial spirit and describe vividly and graphically stirring scenes on the battle-field"

Vide - "The Tamils 1800 Years ago" published by Messrs., Higginbotham & Co., Madras, 1904. P. 209.

(4) P. 139. Porul Adhikáram commentary. Tolk.

(5) Indian Antiquary. Vol. XXII, pp. 66 & 143.

(6) Epigraphia Indica. Vol. VI. July 1901.

Moorthi Swamigal, in his Devaram, mentions one Tagadur(1) which is most probably the present Dharmapuri:

That the prose portion is the major one in this work we learn from the notes on the 174th Sutram of Seyyul Iyal (Tolk.)(2) Besides Prose there are poems of the Agaval metre.(3) The Tagadur Yadrai also has the special characteristic 'Tonmai'. The whole work was writtten in a spirited style, since the subject-matter requires it. Ponmudiyar very graphically describes the preparations for scaling the walls of the Tagadur fortress thus.

"மறனுடைய மறவர்க் கேறவிட னின்றி
நெய்யோ டையவி யப்பி யெவ்வாயு
மெந்திரப் பாவை யியற்றின நிறீஇக்
கல்லுங் கவணுங் கடுவிசைப் பொறியும்
வில்லுங் கணையும் பலபடப் பரப்பிப்
பந்தும் பாவையும் பசிவரிப் புட்டிலு
மென்றிவை பலவுஞ் சென்றுசென் றெறியும்

*   *   *   *.

நோக்குநர் நோக்குநர் நொந்துகை விதிர்க்கும்
தாக்கருந் தானை யிரும்பறை
பூக்கோட் டண்ணுமை கேட்டொறுங் கலுழ்ந்தே."(4)

Examining the style of this metrical portion, we may safely say that the prose of the Tagadur-Yadrai is also of an elevated chaste diction.

3. Chilappatikaram: (The Epic of the Anklet.) The

---

(1) 'தாழையூர் தகடூர் தக்களூர் தருமபுரம்'; (this தருமபுரம் is a shrine in the Tanjore District.) Vide திருநாட்டுத்தொகை.

(2)"பாட்டு வருவது சிறு பான்மை யாகலின். அவைதகடூர் யாத்திரை போல்வன."

(3) Vide stanzas quoted in the commentary on Purattinai Sutrams 8-12. Tolk.

(4) P. 137. Porul Adhikaram.

writer of this great epic was Ilangòvadigal,(1) brother of the Chéra king Senkuttuvan. The author was the contemporary of the poet Sìttalai Sattanar (the author of Manimekalai) and the king of Ceylon, Gayavahu, who is referred to in this work as 'கடல்சூ ழிலங்கைக் கயவாகு வேந்தன்'(2) The Gayavahu referred to here is Gajabahu I. of Ceylon who began his reign in 113 A. D.(3) Senkuttuvan the author's brother was a Saivite.(4) Ilangovadigal led an ascetic life and it is a matter of dispute to which religion he belonged. He speaks with an equal regard to Aruga, Siva and Vishnu. At குணவாயில், where Ilangovadigal resided, there was also a Saivite temple; Tiru Navukkarasu Swamigal mentions one குணவாயில்.(5) This work was undertaken by its author with the set purpose of inculcating the three grand truths, viz, (1) that Justice punishes kings who swerve from the path of righteousness, (2) that a chaste woman is held in veneration even by the great and (3) that Fate has its own way of working and that its course can never be stopped.

The writer himself says that his work is an epic where the poems are interspersed with prose, and that it was read out before Sattanar of Madura.(6) The prose portion is

---

(1) "Ilanko-adikal (A. D. 110-140) was the second son of the Chera king, Athan, and grandson of the Chola king Karikál, by his daughter Sonai. In his youth he renounced the world and became a monk of the Nigrantha sect"; P. 208 "The Tamils 1800 Years ago."

(2) 30-வரந்தருகாதை. L. 160; also உரைபெறுகட்டுரை-ந.

(3) "The reign of this Satakarnin (A-D. 77-133)" referred to in the Chilappatikaram "covers the entire period of the reign of Gajabáhu, king of ceylon, which lasted 12 years from A. D. 113 to 125 according to the Mahawanso". P 8. "The Tamils 1800 Years ago."

(4) 26-கால்கோட்காதை. L. 54-7, 62-7 &c.,

(5) குடவாயில் குணவாயி லான வெல்லாம் புகுவாரைக் கொடு வினைகள் கூடா வன்றே." திருஅடைவு. திருத்தாண்டகம்,

(6) Vide Padigam, L, 88-9.

comparatively very small. The truth of the statement that "the best of prose is often poet's prose because the poet's mind is stored with good choice of figures and has also a disciplined habit in the use of them"(1) may be noticed in Ilangovadigal's Prose. The style is exceedingly grand and picturesque. The felicity of expression is markedly outstanding; and the passages have a thorough poetic flow, with alliterations and rhyme; for, e. g. the second paragraph of the உரைபெறு கட்டுரை runs thus:— "அதுகேட்டுக் கொங்கிளங் கோசர் தங்கணாட் டகத்து, நங்கைக்கு விழவொடு சாந்தி செய்ய, மழைதொழி லென்றும் மாறா தாயிற்று."

The உரைபெறு கட்டுரை is the only prose portion of the work. The passages which are called 'Uraippattu,' & 'Uraippattu madai,' have the least claims to be included in the Province of Prose.

It can be safely said that the above three works were written before 150 A. D. To this period belongs also the commentary of Nakkirar (the celebrated poet: author of Tirumurugarruappadai, Nedunalvadai, stanzas in Purananuru, &c.) (A. D. 100-130)(2) on Irayanar Agapporul. We shall speak of this commentary in detail in the next period since it assumed its written shape only then.

This early period was a period of very great literary activity. The writer of 'The Tamils 1800 years ago' says "The Augustan period of Tamil Literature was, I should say, in the first century of the christian era; and the last College of Poets was then held in Madura in the court of the Tamil king Ugra Pandya. The works of not less than fifty authors of this period have come down to us.(3)"

---

(1) Prof-Earle's English Prose. P. 246.

(2) 'The Tamils 1800 years ago' P. 195.

(3) Ibid: P. 3.

The Medieval Period.

I. A. D. 200 to A. D. 600.

During this period, the Jain ascendancy was great; and its influence on the Tamil Literature was equally great. Most of the Jain Epics were written at this time. Chintamani, Chulamani &c, belong to this period. The Jains were also Sanskrit Scholars; we are greatly indebted to them for their zeal and labour towards the enrichment of our Tamil Literature; and there is no exaggeration when it is remarked that "it was through the fostering care of the Jainas, that the South first seems to have been inspired with new ideals and its literature with new forms of expression."(1) It was the Jains that first began to use to any large extent the bilingual style in writing their religious works. The works which we have now to consider here are the Jain prose works of this 'mongrel sort of diction,' known as Manipravalam style, which is pleasing neither to the purely Tamil nor the purely Sanskrit ear; of these prose works, Sri Puranam and Gadya chintamani deserve mention.

I. Sri Puranam is the Jain biography of the 24 Tirtangaras; in the biography of the Tirtangarar Sri Virttamanar, the story of Jeevaka (the hero of Chintamani) is related, though with much variation in the narration. There is a proportionate intermixture of Sanskrit words with the Tamil words. We shall give a specimen of the style here. "மற்றொரு நாள் ஸிரேணிக மகாராஜன் ஸமவ சரண மடைந்து அசோக வனத்துள் அசோக விருக்ஷ மூலத்து ரூப யௌவன சுபலக்ஷண ஸகிதராகித் தியாநாரூடராகி யிருந்த ஜீவந்தர முனிகளைக் கண்டு அத்தியந்தம் விஸ்மிதனாகி, சுதரும கணதரரை யடைந்து, 'பகவானே ஈ திருசலக்ஷண சகிதராகிய இத்தபோதனர் யார்?' என்று வினவ அவரும் அருளிச் செய்வார்." The purity of the

(1) Vide 'A Literary History of India' by R. W. Frazer, LL. B. pp. 310—11.

Tamil diction is entirely absent in this style; still, the dignity derived from the use of Sanskrit words is not lost.

2. Gadya Chintamani, as the name itself reveals, is a prose work. It is also in the manipravalam style. Pandit Swaminatha Aiyar is of opinion that Tiruttakka Dêver might have got the materials for his Jeevaka Chintamani from this work.

II. A. D. 600—A. D. 1500.

This period is a period of great religious and literary activity in South India. It was during this age that the great sages and devotees of the Saivite and Vaishnavite creeds flourished; it was during this age that most of the great sectarian works were written; it was during this period that the Skanda Puranam of Kachchiappar, the Ramayanam of Kambar and the Peria Puranam of Sekkilar made their appearance; and it was during this age that the great commentators Nachchinarkkiniyar, Parimelalagar, and Adiyarkkunallar exerted their utmost for the elucidation of the classic works of the Sangam age. Reinhold Rost regards the period between the 9th and the 13th centuries as the Augustan age of Tamil Literature. As there is not even a single prose-writer who belonged to this period, we shall have to notice only commentators and their commentaries. It is a remarkable fact in the history of the Tamil Literature that commentaries have been, from a very long time, occupying a prominent place. Following the Tamil Grammar Tolkappiam we include commentaries also in the Prvince of Prose.(1)

I. The first commentary we have to notice is **Nakkirar's commentary on Irayanar Agapporul written by Nilakandanar** of Musiri: Before we say anything about this commentary known as Irayanar Agapporul urai,

---

(1) Vide Illustration at the close of the dissertation.

(also known as Kalaviyal urai), one knotty question meets us at the very outset. Tamil scholars doubt the authenticity of Nakkirar's commentary. Prof. Sundaram Pillai was of opinion that the commentary was not Nakkirar's. After seriously doubting from internal and other evidences the authenticity of the poems of the 11th. Tiru murai ascribed to Nakkirar (of course with the exception of Tiru murugarruppadai) he writes, "Equally apocryphal appears to me the commentary on Eraiyanar Agapporul also ascribed to Nakkirar. It is doubtful whether there existed any Prose Literature at all in the days of Nakkirar. Among the quotations given to illustrate the text, a few are from Chilappatikaram, a work of his own age at best. But the bulk of the illustrations cannot be even so old. The stanzas serially numbered uniformly celebrate the prowess of a Pandya, diversely named Arikésari, Varòdaya, Paramkusan, Vichari (all of sanskrit origin) * * *. But the opening passages of the commentary leave no room for further discussion, for Nakkirar is there made to point out how his commentary was transmitted through nine generations, counting from himself."(1) We have seen that there existed no separate prose works, and that prose was used here and there in the particular composition 'உரையிடையிட்ட பாட்டுடைச்செய்யுள்;' A careful study of the commentary reveals that its real history must have been this. Of the several Sangam Poets who tried to make out the correct meaning of the Agapporul Sutrams, Nakkirar was the only scholar who was able to expound all the subtle points in the work, and his commentary won the applause of the whole Literati of the Tamil Board. Nakkirar taught his son the meaning of the Sutrams, detailing all the subtle points. Nakkirar's son taught, what he was taught, to his son in turn. Thus the elaborate commentary, orally transmitted, was at last handed over to Nilakandanar;

(1) Christian College Magazine. Aug. '91. P. 128. The Ten Tamil Idyls.

he thought it fit that the whole commentary should be written down and very wisely wrote the commentary, prefixing a history explaining what occasioned Nakkirar to comment upon the Agapporul and how he came in possession of that sacred treasure. Nilakandanar freely gives quotations from contemporary works too; and it is no wonder the stanzas refer to Arikesari since he might have lived either before or at the same time as Nilakandanar; and there is nothing absurd in Nilakandanar's pointing out how Nakkirar's commentary was transmitted to him through nine generations. That this must have been the real history of the commentary, we infer from the manner in which the commentary proceeds; e. g. we have such expressions as "உரைநடந்து வாரா நின்றமை நோக்கி", "இனி உரைநடந்த வாறு சொல்லுதும்", "இங்ஙனம் வருகின்ற துரை". These clearly show that Nilakandanar is the writer of the commentary that was almost orally transmitted to him. The view that the Payiram was written by Nilakandanar and the rest by Nakkirar is not tenable, for, in the body of the commentary we find "மேற்பாயிரத்து ளுரைத்தாம்". A similar case we notice with regard to the commentary of Nampillai on Nammalwar Tirumozhi. It was Vadakku Tiruveedippillai who wrote down that commentary; still the commentary is known after the name of its originator as Nampillai Œdu(நம்பிள்ளையீடு). That Nakkirar was the commentator cannot be denied. Nachchinarkkiniar expressly writes thus; "கடைச் சங்கத்தாருட் களவியற் பொருள்கண்ட கணக்காயனார் மகனார் நக்கீரர்"; (1) again" இவ்வுரை செய்தார் யாரோ வென்றவழி மதுரைக் கணக்காயனார் மகனார் நக்கீரரென உரை யெழுதினான் பெயர் கூறுதலுஞ் சூத்திரஞ் செய்தான் பெயர் கூறுதலோடு ஒத்த இலக்கணத்த தாயிற்று. 'அன்பி னைந்திணைக் களவெனப் படுவ-தந்தண ரருமறை மன்ற லெட்டனுட்-கந்தருவ வழக்க மென்மனார் புலவர்' என்பது பாயிர மின்றித் தானே நூன் முகத்து நின்ற இருவகைப் பாயிரவுரை

(1) P. 808. Porul. Tolk.

யும் பெய்து உரைக்கப்பட்டது"(1) If we can believe Nachchinarkkiniyar, we can even say that Nakkirar wrote the main outlines of his commentary, since we have உரை யெழுதினான் instead of உரைகண்டவன்: if that be the case, we must say that Nilakandanar re-wrote and enlarged it. We see, now, that Nakkirar was the commentator; Nilakandanar, who was taught by his teacher the text and the commentary, wrote down the commentary giving an introduction, and ample quotations. Now, as to the style of the commentary, we have already seen that it is highly classic, argumentative, and elegant with much poetic flow. The writer of 'The Tamils 1800 years ago' takes Nilakandanar as the commentator on the Agapporul(2).

2. The next commentator is **Ilampuranar**. As he was the first commentator on Tolkappiyam, he was given the distinguishing title of '*The* commentator' (உரையாசிரியர்) and he is always known by that name. Only a portion of his commentary is now extant. Both Senavarayar and Nachchinarkkiniyar refer to his commentary and often criticise it.(3) Sivagnana yogigal, when he speaks of the Tolkappiyam commentators, begins his list with Urai-Asiriyar. That Ilampuranar was not acquainted with Sanskrit we understand both from his commentary and from what Sivagnana swamigal says of him.(4) His commentary on orthography is considered very valuable. The title of 'Adigal' (அடிகள்) attached to his name is significant; Adiyarkkunallar writes "உரையாசிரியராகிய இளம்பூரண அடிகள்," This

---

(1) P. 814—Tolk. Marabiyal. Adiyarkkunallar writes கணக்காயனார் மகனார் நக்கீரனா ருரைத்த இறையனார் பொருளுரை'; P. 198. Chilap.

(2) "Nilakandan the commentator should have flourished in the earlier half of the eighth century". p. 9. "The Tamils 1800 Years ago.

(3) Vide their commentaries on Etymology, Tolk.

(4) P. 26. சூத்திர விருத்தி. "தமிழ்நூ லொன்றே வல்ல உரையாசிரியரையுள்ளிட்டோர்."

suggests to us that he was probably a scholar held in great veneration. His style is good ; it is often brief.

3. **Kalladar** was one of the five commentators on Tolkappiyam ; his commentary is not now extant and it was not much read.

4. **Perasiriyar** was one of the five Tolkappiyam commentators. Besides his commentary on Tolkappiyam, he has written commentaries on the great 'Tirukkovayar' and 'Kuruntogai' (with the exception of 20 stanzas). In his commentary on Porul Adhikaram, Nachchinarkkiniyar refers to Perasiriyar's commentaries on Tolkappiyam and Kuruntogai.(1) The Seyyul Iyal portion of the printed Tolkappiyam is Perasiriyar's, not Nachchinarkkiniyar's. In his commentary on Kovayar, he quotes twice from the Devaram of Appar Swamigal(2) and hence we are enabled to say that Perasiriyar lived after the beginning of the 7th century A. D., for "the two great Saiva devotees Appar (573 A. D.) and Tiru Gnana Sambandha were contemporaries of the two Pallava kings Mahendravarman I. and Narasimhavarman I. Sambandhar was a contemporary of a general of the Pallava king, Narasimhavarman I. whose enemy was the Western Chalukya king PulikesanII.(3) " That Perasiriyar was a Saivite needs no proof. Perasiriyar was master of an elegant and easy style. His style is grammatical, graphic, and simple. Here is a specimen from his commentary on Tirukkovayar.

P. 295, "அறத்தொடு நிற்றல் ; தலைவி தோழிக் குரைத்தல்".

"யாமுன் பொருநாள் கடற்கரை யிடத்தே வண்டல் செய்து விளையாடா நின்றேமாக, அந்நேரத்தொரு தோன்றல், நம் வண்டல்

(1) Vide pp. 230 & 465; p. 89. Porul. Tolk.

(2) One from சித்தத்தொகைத் திருக்குறுந்தொகை,
"அண்ட மாரிரு ளூடு கடந்தும்ப, ருண்டு போலுமோ ரொண்சுடர்", and the other from தனித் திருவிருத்தம்— "எம் பிறை நல்வீணை வாசிக்குமே."

(3) The Epigraphia Indica. Vol. III, pp. 277—8.

மனைக்கு யாம் விருந்தென்று வந்து நின்றபொழுது நீபூக்கொய்யச் சிறிது புடைபெயர்ந்தாய்; அந் நிலைமைக்கட் கீழ்காற்று மிகுதலாற் கரைமேலேறுங்கடல் மேல்வந்துற்றது. உற, யான் றோழியோ! தோழியோ! என்று நின்னை விளித்தேன்; அது கண்டிரங்கி அவனருளொடுவந்து தன் கையைத்தந்தான்; யானு மயக்கத்தாலே அதனை நின்கை யென்று தொட்டேன்; அவனும் பிறிதொன்றுஞ் சிந்தியாது, என்னுயிர் கொண்டுதந்து, என்னைக் கரைக்கணுய்த்துப் போயினான்; அன்று என் நாணினால் நினக்கதனைச் சொல்லமாட்டிற்றிலேன்." This is the best specimen of elegant and simple prose; and this is the true prose style. In his commentary on Tirukkovayar alone, Perasiriyar quotes from ten standard works. He had a special taste for the Agapporul and he made a clear study of its grammar.

5. **Senavarayar** was a contemporary of Nachchinarkkiniyar;his commentary on Etymology is by some considered superior to Nachhinarkkiniyar's. He wrote the commentary only on the Etymological portion of Tolkappiyam. He was a great Sanskrit scholar, and in his commentary, he followed the Sanskrit principles of grammar. Sivagnana swamigal writes of this; "வடநூற்கடலை நிலைகண்டறிந்த சேனாவரையர் எழுத்ததிகாரத்திற் குரைசெய்தாராயின் இன்னோரன்ன பொருளனைத்துந்தோன்ற ஆசிரியர் கருத்துணர்ந்துரைப்பர். அவர் சொல்லதிகாரம் போலப் பெரும்பயன் படாமைகருதி எழுத்திற் குரைசெய்யா தொழிந்தமையின், தமிழ் நூலொன்றே வல்லவுரையாசிரியரை யுள்ளிட்டோ ருரையை ஆசிரியர் கருத்தாகக்கொண்டு பின்னுள்ளோரு மயங்குவா ராயினார்."(1) Senavarayar boldly refutes the commentary of Ilampuranar in many places.(2) His prose style cannot be fully judged from a commentary on a grammatical work; it is not so simple as that of Nachchinarkkiniyar. This is his style. "யானைநூல் வல்லானொருவன் காட்டுட் போவுழி ஓர் யானை யடிச்சுவடுகண்டு இஃதரசுவாவாதற் கேற்ற இலக்கணமுடைத்தென்றவழி &c."(3) In his commentary on Etymology, Nachchinarkkiniyar often refers(4)

(1) P. 26. சூத்திரவிருத்தி.(சிவஞான.) (2) pp. 45, 92 (சேனா-ம்).
(3) P. 32 (சேனா-ம்). (4) pp. 2, 4 &c., (நச்சி-ம்).

to Senavarayar's commentary. Senavarayar had an extensive knowledge of the Tamil Literature and in his commentary on Etymology, he gives quotations from a good number of classical works.

6. **Nachchinarkkiniyar** was the Mallinatha Suri of Tamil Literature. He was a Saivite Brahman of Madura.(1) He lived about the close of the ninth century A. D. In his commentary on Seyyul Iyal, Nachchinarkkiniyar quotes a sentence from Cheraman Perumal Nayanar's 'Tiruk kailaya Gnana Ula' (திருக் கைலாய ஞானவுலா.)(2) Cheraman Perumal lived in the first half of the 9th century (about 825 A. D.) Hence 825 A. D. is the upper limit to Nachchinarkkiniyar's age. This fact supported by the other evidences given in the article on 'Nachchinarkkiniyar'in the"சித்தாந்த தீபிகை"( ) leads us to the conclusion that the commentator lived towards the close of the 9th century. He is believed to have lived to a great age and this must have been true since the number of works on which he wrote his commentary is great. The Tolkappiyam, Kalittogai, Pattuppattu, Chintamani, and the 20 stanzas of Kuruntogai,are the works which posess his precious commentary. He was a scholar of very vast learning gifted with a tenacious memory which could equal that of a Johnson or a Macaulay. His unsurpassed skill as a commentator may be inferred from the fact that the works he undertook to annotate are all very difficult classic works; and his intellectual superiority is also clear from the fact that he was able to annotate the twenty stanzas of Kuruntogai which baffled even the acute genius of the great Perasiri-

---

(1) "தூய ஞான நிறைந்த சிவச்சுடர் தானே யாகிய தன்மை யாளன்" உரைச் சிறப்பு.

(2) "அது திருவுலாப் புறத்துள் *'வாமான வீசன் வரும்' என முடித்துமேல் வேறொருறுப்பாயவாறும்" தொல், நச்சி; செய்யுளியல் சூ.கசுக. Vide 'செந்தமிழ்' Vol. II. No. 4.

*சேரமான் ஞானவுலா. L. 116,

(3) Vide சித்தாந்த தீபிகை. Vol. IV. No. 2.

yar; and in his several commentaries, he has referred to more than 80 works, all of classic merit. His commentary on Tolkappiyam is highly praised;(1) and the simple beauty of the prose style in his commentaries won for him the high appellation of 'அமுதவாயர்' (the ambrosia-mouthed). In his commentaries, he explains only what requires explanation and points out only what is essential; he never passes over difficult portions; wherever possible he gives the derivations of words; wherever necessary he gives apt quotations; wherever he feels that his view of a question is the correct one he boldly criticises the other commentators. He freely uses Tamil idioms and proverbs. He can scan things wonderfully well. He finds beauty where an ordinary eye sees nothing. A keen sense of perceiving beauty coupled with an analysing faculty is the prominent characteristic of Nachchinarkkiniyar. His style is simple and fine; the occasional poetic flow, the balance of style, and the unembarrased flow of the diction are the outstanding features of his writings and it may well be said that 'Good prose writing commences with Nachchinarkkiniyar.' His mode of analysing a stanza is simply admirable; all the aforesaid beauties of Nachchinarkkiniyar may be noticed in his commentary on the following stanza of Chintamani.

கரும்பே தேனே யமிர்தே காமர் மணியாழே
யரும்பார் மலர்மே லணங்கே மழலை யன்னம்மே
சுரும்பார் சோலை மயிலே குயிலே சுடர்வீசும்
பெரும்பூண் மன்னன் பாவாய் பூவாய் பிணைமானே.(இலக்.76.)

If any other commentator came across this stanza, we are sure, he would pass it over alleging that the meaning is explicit. A commentator like the terse Parimelalagar would make a curt remark like this "இஃது ஆர்வமொழி யலங்கார மென்க" and pass over it. Not so with our Nachchinarkkiniyar; he explains to us how Ilakkanai deserves these

(1) "உச்சிமேற் புலவர்கொள் நச்சினார்க் கினியம்" இலக்கணக் கொத்துரை; சிறப்புப்பாயிரம்.

endearing epithets. This is his beautiful commentary on the stanza. "கணவற்கு மெய்ம்முழுதும் இனிதாயிருத்தலிற் கரும்பு நல்லாருறுப்பெல்லாங்கொண்டு இயற்றலிற் றேன். இவ்வுலகிலில்லாத மிக்கசுவையும் உறுதியுங் கொடுத்தலின் அமிர்து. காமவேட்கையை விளைவித்து இனியபண்டோற்றலின் மழலையையுடையதோர் யாழ். கணவற்குச் செல்வத்தைக் கொடுத்தலிற் றிரு. நடையாலன்னம். சாயலான் மயில். காலமன்றியுங் கேட்டோர்க்கு இன்பஞ் செய்தலின் குயில். மன்னன் மகளே யென்றல் புகழன்மையின், மன்னன் பாவாய் என்றது அவன் கண்மணிப்பாவை யென்பதுணர்த்திற்று; இனி யிவள் கொல்லிப்பாவை யன்று, மன்னன்பாவை யென்றுமாம். சேடியர் கற்பித்த கட்டளை தப்பாமற் கூறலிற் பூவை. நோக்கத்தான் மான்." We see in this passage the clear style of an intelligent commentator. The above passage is the best specimen of Tamil Prose, free from all mannerisms. Were it not for the great service rendered to Tamil Literature by this prince of commentators, we could hardly see at present even that little taste which the Tamil students bear towards their mother-tongue; and no better eulogy can be bestowed on this great patron of Tamil Literature than that short sentence pregnant with sense which says,—"வேத போத, நச்சினார்க் கினிய னெச்சில் நறுந்தமிழ் நுகர்வர் நல்லோர்."

7. **Parimelalagar** was the famons commentator on 'the Universal code'—The Tirukkural. He is believed to have lived at Conjeeveram, since, in the Tondai-mandala-sathagam, we have "திருக்காஞ்சி வாழ்பரி மேலழகன், வள்ளுவனார்க்கு வழிகாட்டி னன்றொண்டை மண்டலமே"; but this remains a matter of dispute. He refers to king Bhoja in his introduction to Kamattuppal. Probably he was a Vaishnavite; he refers to the sacred work 'Tiruvaimozhi'. He knew Sanskrit also. His Prose, unlike that of Nachchinarkkiniyar, is very terse and in some places too brief to be easily intelligible. There is one thing very remarkable about his style in this commentary. Like the style of the great Poet whose work he is annotating, his style also is so much compressed

in form that one word in a sentence cannot be removed or substituted without at the same time damaging the compactness of the style. Not a single word he uses unnecessarily. The quotations he gives are very apt ; in his whole commentary on Kural he gives quotations from about twenty select works. His style gets often poetical in its flow, as it cannot but become, when its master seeks after compression of expression. The very first line of his Uraip-payiram has this flow with alliteration and rhyme ;(1) and on the whole it may be said that his prose style, though not very simple, is dignified and classic.

8. **Perundevanar** was the commentator on Virasoliyam. Both the author and the commentator were contemporaries.

9. **Adiyarkkunallar** was the commentator of the old epic Chilappatikarm. He lived in the latter half of the 12th. century A. D. We have his commentary only on a portion of the book. Most probably Adiyarkkunallar was a Saivite ; wherever he has to speak of Siva, he refers to him as 'இறைவன்' the 'omnipresent'(2). If the use of the epithet 'Nachchinarkkiniyar' for Siva in the Devaram hymns is one of the arguments for saying that the commentator who bore that name must have been a Saivite, the use of the epithet 'Adiyarkkunallar' in the Devaram must also help us in pronouncing that the commentator whose name was Adiyarkkunallar must have been a Saivite ; we have "கண்ணுளார்கரு வூருளானிலை, யண்ணலார் அடியார்க்கு நல்லரே." (3)

The work which Adiyarkkunallar undertook to annotate was a very difficult work ; for Chilappatikaram is not a mere Iyal Tamil composition ; one who undertakes to

---

(1) 'இந்திரன் முதலிய இறையவர் பதங்களும், அந்தமில் லின்பத் தழிவில் வீடும்'. again, 'வீடென்பது, சிந்தையு மொழியுஞ் செல்லா நிலைமைத்து'.

(2) pp. 164-5, 214, 294 &c.

(3) திருஞான சம்பந்தர் தேவாரம், 2-திருமுறை, 30 பக்கம்.

annotate it should have a clear knowledge of the three branches of Tamil Literature, Iyal, Isai and Natakam. The Arangerru Kadai requires a knowledge of the Nataka Tamil; and portions of the Kadaladu Kadai, Kanal Vari &c. require a knowledge of Isai Tamil. That Adiyarkkunallar wrote this commentary only after a careful study of the works on Iyal, Isai and Natakam, available to him then, is quite clear. He seems to have been a voracious reader of books; and he gives quotations wherever he can; in his commentary, he refers to about 56 works in all; of these 39 belong to the province of Iyal Tamil, 7 to Isai and 10 to Natakam. His prose sentences are often long, and they, now and then, have the poetic flow. His style is always clear.

The Modern Period: 1500 A. D-X.

During the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, there was much religious activity especially of the Saiva Siddhanta system and the 14 philosophical treatises were written during that age. Speaking of this 'Cycle of the Literary Revival', Dr. Caldwell says, "Perhaps the most valuable, certainly the most thoughtful, compositions of this period were the Philosophical treatises in explanation of the Vedantic and Saiva Syddhantic doctrines, some of these translations from Sanskrit and some imitations." (1)

1. The modern period starts with the name of **Niramba Alagia Desikar** who lived about the close of the 16th. century. There is one thing remarkable about him: He was both a poet and commentator. As a poet he holds high rank. The Parangirippuranam and Setupuranam were written by him; and he was the commentator on the Tiruvarutpayan of Uma-pathi-Sivachariar. His name, tradition tells us, is an instance of 'Lucus a non lucendo'; but, it may be noticed that Manikka-Vasagar refers to Siva as 'Niramba Alagiar'.(2) He writes a simple and beautiful style.

(1). Dr. Caldwell's Comparative Grammar, P. 144.

(2). 'நித்த மணாளர் நிரம்ப வழகியர், சித்தத் திருப்பராலன்னே யென்னும்', அன்னைப்பத்து, திருவாசகம்.

2. About the middle of the 17th. century, there appears for the first time in the history of our Tamil Literature a foreigner–**Robert de Nobilibus**–who learnt Tamil and wrote Tamil prose works. A short history of his life and works is found in the Madura District Manual (pp. 116, 180. Part iii). "Fired with a noble zeal for Christianity and emulous of the heroism of St. Paul, he resolved to dedicate his whole life to one object and to become himself a Hindu in order to save Hindus." He assumed the name of Tatouva Bodaga Swami (தத்வ போதக சுவாமி). The following are his chief works. (1) "The Kandam-a Tamil work in 4 large volumes; It forms a complete body of theology, and was intended to be used as a means of converting the heathen and confirming neophytes in the principles of the faith. The style is simple and somewhat diffuse, in conformity with the taste of the Hindus for whom it was written. (2) An abridgment of the Kandam with 32 meditative sermons added. (3) The Attuma Nireiyanam or knowledge of the soul, a Tamil work of severer and closer style than the Kandam, replete with words unavoidably borrowed from the Sanskrit; and (4) 'The Touchanadikkaram' or refutation of calumnies, a Tamil polemical work as indicated by the title". It is said of the works which he wrote in Tamil that they are 'most remarkable for both grammatical and idiomatic elegance'.

Towards the close of the 17th. century, a group of writers sprang up, a good number of them being grammarians.

3. **Mayilerum Perumal Pillai** of Tinnevelly (1670 A.D.) was the commentator on the first 37 agavals of Kalladam (a poetical work of very high merit written about the 10th. century A. D). He was the teacher of Swaminatha Desikar, the writer of Ilakkanakkottu.

4. **Vaidyanatha Desikar** of Tiruvarur (1680 A.D.) was the writer of the grammar IlakkanaVilakkam and its commentary;it treats of the five-fold divisions of Tamil grammar. The Pattiyal of the work was written by his son Tyagaraja Desikar. Vaidyanatha Desikar's style is an imitation of the

old classic style and rises above the ordinary prose style; e. g. "மனமொழி மெய்களின் வணங்குது மகிழ்ந்தே" என்பவாகலின் மனத்தாற் றணிவு தோன்ற நினைத்தலும், மொழியாற் பணிவு தோன்ற வாழ்த்தலுந், தலையாற் றணிவு தோன்ற இறைஞ்சலும் அடங்கப் பொதுப்பட 'வணங்கி' யென்றும்;" &c. (P. 10-எழுத். இலக். விளக்.)

5. **Subramanya Deekshatar** of Kurukoor (1680 A. D.) was the writer of the Tamil Prayoga-vivekha. He wrote its commentary also.

6. **Swaminatha Desikar** (1680 A. D.) also known by the name of Œsana Desikar was the writer of Ilakkanakkottu with its commentary. From one of his Urai - Sutrams (P.15. பாயிரம், இலக். கொத்.) we learn that both the work and its commentary were written by him; and to justify his position he cites the two cases of Vaidyanatha Desikar and Subramanya Deekshatar who wrote commentaries on their own works. Although he was a great Tamil Scholar, he seems to have had very crooked notions, in some cases, about his own Tamil language and literature. He was a good prose-writer. His style is very lucid and vigorous; e. g. see the passage beginning "திருவைக் கோவைக்குங் கூட்டுக. மாணிக்கவாசகர் அறிவாற் சிவனே யென்பது திண்ணம்............அவரிவைகளிருக்கவே அவைகளை விரும்புத லென்னெனின், பாற்கடலுட் பிறந்து அதனுள் வாழுமீன்கள் அப்பாலை விரும்பாது வேறுபலவற்றை விரும்புதல் போல அவரதியற்கை யென்க". (இலக். கொத்.)

7. **Sankara Namasivaya Pulavar** (1700 A.D.) was the student of Swaminatha Desikar. He has written a fine commentary on the Nannul of Pavananthiar.

The last five writers were specialists in Tamil Grammar and they were contemporaries.

8. Two decades after the opening of the 18th. century there again appears a foreign author **Constantius Beschi** who wrote fine Tamil Prose works. 'He was born at Castiglione (in North Italy) on the 8th. November 1680. He

was educated at Rome, and in due time became a Professed Brother of the Order of Jesuits. His great natural endowments and extraordinary facility in the attainment of languages soon pointed him out as a fit person to be employed in the Indian Mission; and in 'holy obedience' to his vows, he embarked for the East and arrived at Goa in the year 1707. Beschi was highly skilled as a linguist. In addition to Italian, his mother-tongue, he had mastered Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Portuguese, Spanish and French; and of the Indian Languages, he was learned in the Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani and Persian. The two latter he is stated to have acquired in the short space of three months for the express purpose of obtaining an interview with Chunda Sahib, the Nabob, who was so astonished at his genius that he presented him with a palanquin and bestowed on him the name of Ismatti Sunnyasi. In addition, the Nabob made him his Dewan. He held his Dewanship until 1740; and in 1742 his constitution, broken by the effect of climate, gave way and he died at Manapar.' 'The name adopted by Beschi after he arrived in the Tamil country was Dhairya Natha which is a free translation of his name Constantius but we are told that after the publication of his Tembavani, the title of Viramamuni was conferred upon him by Pandits of the Tamil country.' The following is a list of his chief works; (1) In the year 1726, he wrote his Tembavani, a fabulous mythological poem in 30 cantos on Scriptural subjects. (2) In 1727 his prose work Vediar Orukkam, also styled 'உபதேசாத்திராகரம்' was written. The book consists of a series of considerations touching the duties of one called to an apostolical life. The style of this work is said to be rich and sparkling. Dr. Pope writes, "Of his prose writings the very admirable Vediar Orukkam 'The Duties of Catechists' is the best; it is the best model for the student of Tamil Prose". (3) In 1728 his "Veda Vilakkam, Illustration of Religion" was published. It is free from verbosity. (4) In 1729 he wrote the commentary on his Tembavani,

(5) The Gnana-Unarttal, in prose, is a didactic and doctrinal work of a very elevated style. (6) 'The adventures of Guru Simple (Noodle)' Tale of the foolish priest and his disciples, is a prose satire, It consists of a collection of stories, all very funny. The stories are nicely woven together. The style is simple and natural.(7) Tonnul-Vilakkam is a treatise on the five-fold divisions of Tamil Grammar. (8) Sadur Agaradhi is a dictionary of the High Dialect. (9) He wrote also a Tamil Grammar of the Common Dialect (in Latin), 1728 A. D. His other works are Adeikkala Malai, Tiruchabai Canidam, Vamen Cadei, a Tamil and Latin Dictionary, A Latin Translation of the first two parts of Kural &c.

Beschi's prose works are much read, because the style is very simple. It sparkles with life and is never dull. Unlike Robert de Nobilibus, he was averse to introducing many Sanskrit terms and expressions into his Tamil works. It is believed that the marks by which the long e and o are now distinguished from the short were first introduced by Beschi. Speaking of Beschi's works, Dr. Caldwell writes "His prose style in the colloquial dialect, though good, is not of pre-eminent excellence. It is a remarkable illustration of the difference in the position occupied in India at present by Poetry and Prose respectively that Beschi's poetry, however much admired, is now very little read; while his prose works, particularly his grammars and dictionaries of both the Tamil Dialects are in great demand." *

9. The next writer we have to consider is the great **Sivagnana Swamigal**; he was a poet, philosopher, critic, and commentator, who lived in the latter half of the 18th. century (d. 1785 A. D. Visvavasu). He was a great

---

* From 1. Introduction to Beschi's Grammar of கொடுந்தமிழ், by R. W. Mahon. 2. Madura District Manual, Chap 11. 3. Introduction to Tonnul Vilakkam. 4. Christian College Magazine, October 1891. P. 276-8. 5. Introduction to Kural. & 6. Dr. Caldwell's Comp. Grammar. pp. 149-50.

genius of whom the Tamilians are ever proud. "The famous Adhinam at Thiruvavaduthurai has produced very many great sages, poets, and writers in its days but it produced none equal to Sivagnana Yogi. The Tamil writers do not think that any praise is too lavish when bestowed upon him. He was a great poet and rhetorician, a keen logician and philosopher and commentator and a great Sanskrit scholar."(1)

I. *Sivagnana Swami as a poet*: He was the author of the first canto of the famous Kanchi Puranam, a work remarkble for the imagery of its description andgreat originality. The stanzas in this work are composed in difficult metres; Metrical somersaults are also present. His minor works are about 16 in number, the most widely-read of them being (1) Somesar Mudhumori Venba, a work illustrating the Tirukkural stanzas from stories in the Ramayanam, Peria puranam &c., and (2) Amudhambikai Pillai-Tamil (அமுதாம்பிகைப் பிள்ளைத் தமிழ்) a work of high poetic excellence:

II. *Sivagnana Swami as a commentator*: As a commentator he holds the most respectable place in our literature. His elaborate commentary on the Sivagnana Botham of Meikanda Deva has won very high admiration and it is known as the 'Dravida Maha Bhashyam' and the author was hence called the 'Dravida Maha Bhashya Munivar'. He has written also a short commentary on the same work. His profound knowledge of the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy for the elucidation of which he worked so much, may be noticed in these commentaries. He has also translated into Tamil the Sanskrit Tarka-Sangraham.

III. *Sivagnana Swami as a critic*: He was a very bold critic. His Ilakkana-Vilakka Churavali is a criticism on Vaidyanatha Desikar's Ilakkana-vilakkam. He has written an elaborate commentary on the Payiram and the

---

(1) Vide Translation of Sivagnana Botham: p. xvi.

first sutram (orthography) of Tolkappiam; there, he criticises the views of the various commentators, points out where they have gone wrong and establishes his own view. His 'சித்தாந்தமரபு கண்டன கண்டனம்,' as the name itself indicates, is a polemical dissertation. His 'சிவசமவாதவுரை மறுப்பு' is also a book of criticism disproving the views of Gnanaprakasar, a commentator on Sivagnana Siddhiar. He has also written a commentary on the 1st. stanza of Kamba Ramayanam; it contains objections with answers. His master-skill becomes prominent when we notice that he has written a very long disquisition for the purpose of defending his view of the meaning and grammar of the single word 'எடுத்து' which occurs in a stanza of Sivagnana Siddhiar. The very title of the disquisition is pedantic and infusing awe in the minds of his opponents. He styles it 'எடுத்து என்னுஞ் சொல்லுக்கிட்ட வயிரக் குப்பாயம்'—the adamantine armour equipped for the defence of the word 'எடுத்து.' In his philosophical treatises, we find many words unavoidably borrowed from Sanskrit.

IV. Sivagnana Swami as a Teacher : He had twelve disciples under him. The greatest of his students was Kachchiappa Munivar, the author of 'தணிகைப் புராணம்' a classical work. Sivagnana Swami was a specialist in Tamil Grammar. The twelve students of Sivagnana Swami followed the noble example set by their worthy master and they exerted their utmost for improving the Tamil language and literature.

V. Sivagnana Swami as a Prose-writer : His prose writings are his philosophical discussions and commentaries. His style has great vigour and free flow; the use of apt words and the excellence of diction are very admirable. We shall here give a specimen of his style. The following passage is a direct and bold criticism on Gnanaprakasar's view that in the expression 'வாரணம்' as applied to Vinayakar there is ருபகம். "வாரண முகத்தை யுடையானை" 'வாரணம்'

என்றாகுபெயராற் கூறி, 'ஒருகோட்டன்' முதலிய விசேடணங்களுக்கு விசேடியமாக வைத்த ஆசிரியர் கருத்தறிய மாட்டாது, 'வாரணமென்று ரூபகம் பண்ணுக' என்றீர். ரூபகப் பிரயோசனமுள்ள பதான்னுவய மில்லாத விடத்து ரூபகஞ் செய்தல் பொருந்தாதென்பதறியகில்லீர். அலங்கார சாஸ்திரம் படித்தறிந்தீராயின், இவ்வாறு ரூபகத்திற்கும் ஆகுபெயர்க்கும் பேதந் தெரியாமற் சொல்லி யிழுக்குறீர்." Sivagnana Yogigal was one of those rare exceptions that had the fortune of possessing both the creative and the critical spirit in them. He is one of the very chief glories of Tamil Poetry; and by nothing is the Tamil Land so glorious as by its Poetry.

11. Chokkappa Navalar was the commentator on Tanjai-Vanan-Kovai; his commentary is much appreciated. His style is clear and distinct.

12. and 13. With the opening of the 19th. Century there commences a rapid development of Prose Literature. **Visagapperumalaiyar** and **Saravanapperumalaiyar** (sons of Tiruttani Kandappaiyar—a student of Kachchiappa Munivar) were both Prose-writers. Visagapperumalaiyar has written a grammar for beginners called 'Bala Bodha Ilakkanam'; and a small treatise on the usefulness of Education 'கல்விப்பயன்'. Saravanapperumalaiyar has written two grammatical works, one treating of 'Prosody' and the other of the 'Figures of Speech'. He was a commentator too; he has written commentaries on (1) Tiruvalluva malai, (2) a portion of the Naidatham of Ati-Vira-Rama, and (3) a portion of the Prabu-Linga-Leelai of Sivaprakasar. Besides these commentaries, he has written several pamphlets; some of these were discussions (on grammatical points) with Thandava raya Mudaliar, whose great work we shall presently consider.

14. Thandava Raya Mudaliar was born at Villinallur (Villiampakkam) near Chunampet. He belonged to the Siddhanta Saiva Sect. His father was Kandaswami Mudaliyar; his elder brother was Muniappa Mudaliyar. His

father died while he was yet young. He then went to பொன் விளைந்த களத்தூர் and remained there under the guardianship of his uncle Kumarasami Vadyar ; he received his primary education from his uncle. From his very youth, he had a special taste for his mother-tongue. He studied Tamil Literature and Grammar under Velappa Desikar (உழலூர் வேலப்ப தேசிகர்), the fourth descendant of Andhaga Kavi Vira Raghava (அந்தகக் கவிவீரராகவ முதலியார்). He then came to Madras; and, here, he drank deep of the Tamil Literature with the aid of Visvanatha Pillai (புரசை விச்வநாதபிள்ளை) and Vidhvan Ramanuja Mudaliar of Kunimedu. He made a special study of Tolkappiyam ; he studied orthography and etymology under that specialist, always known by the name of Tolkappiyam Varadappa Mudaliar and for the study of the difficult but very interesting portion Porul-Adhikaram, he repaired to the great Pandit of Sri Kari (சீகாழி)-Vaduga-natha Thambiran who belonged to the family of Arunachala Kavirayar, the author of the famous Rama-Natakam. He also learnt Sanskrit, Telugu, Canarese, Hindustani, Maharashtra and English ; and like the humming-bees that gather together and enjoy the sweet honey from fragrant flowers, our author derived great intellectual pleasure from his knowledge of more than half a dozen languages. He was appointed Tamil Pandit in the Goverument College (Madras), and when that college ceased to work, he was made Judge in the Court at Chingleput in 1843 A. D. As a Judge, he did his duties very conscientiously. When he was Tamil Teacher in the Government College he had, on several occasions, to enter into hot discussions on literary topics with Ramanuja Kavirayar and Saravanapperumal-aiyar. Besides his famous *Panchatantram*, he wrote also a collection of stories (கதாமஞ்சரி); his other works are Tiruttanikai Malai, Tirupporur Padigam, Ilakkana Vina Vidai &c. He also prepared, by a careful examination of the cadjan books, correct copies of Tirukkural (Parimelalagar's commentary), Naladiyar, Jeevaka Chintamani, Kalladam,

Divakaram and Tolkappiyam ; and some of these he printed. He was of great help to Kottayur Sivakkolundu Desikar in his preparation of Koteechura Kovai(கோடீச்சுரக் கோவை). It is also said of him that, at the request of some Christian Missionaries, he wrote, under the nom-de-plume of Muttusami Pillai, a pamphlet called Veda-Vikalpa-dikkaram (வேதவிகற்ப திக்காரம்) a refutation of Veda-vikalpam, a work written against the Bible by one Ponnambala Swami of Purasawakkam. He has also written some minor works on the subject of Love (Agapporul.) This prince of Tamil Prose writers passed away in the year 1850 A. D.(1)

The Panchatantram. ('The hand-book of practical moral philosophy'): The Panchatantram, so called because it is divided into five books, is from the literary point of view, the best among Tamil Prose works. Speaking about the origin of the Panchatantram, Prof. Arthur. A. Macdonell writes,"If not actually a Buddhistic work, the Panchatantram must be derived from Buddhistic sources. This follows from the fact that a number of its fables can be traced to Buddhistic writings and from the internal evidence of the book itself. Though now divided into only five books, it is shown by the evidence of the oldest translation to have at one time embraced twelve. What its original name was, we cannot say ; but, it may not improbably have been called after the two jackals Karataka and Damanaka, who play a prominent part in the First Book, for, the title of the old Syriac Version is Kalilag and Damnag ; and that of the Arabic Translation Kalilah and Dimnah".(2)

The *first* book, entitled-'Separation of Friends' (மித்ர பேதம்-sowing discord among friends) gives the story of a Bull and a Lion who are made friends by two Jackals; afterwards, one of the Jackals feeling itself neglected by

(1) A free translation of the Tamil preface to Panchatantram, edited by V. G. Suryanarayana Sastriar.

(2) History of the Sanskrit Literature : pp. 369-72.

the Lion starts an intrigue by telling both the Lion and the Bull that each is plotting against the other, and its artful device brought about the end it desired; the Bull was killed by the angry Lion and the Jackal, as prime-minister of the latter, enjoys the fruits of its machinations. The *second* book, called 'Acquisition of friends' (சுகிர்ல்லாபம்) relates the adventures of a Tortoise, a Deer, a Crow and a Mouse; 'it is meant to illustrate the advantages of judicious friendship'. The *third* book entitled சந்தி விக்ரகம் ('Associating with a foe and ruining him') gives the story of 'the war of the Crows and the Owls'. It points out the danger of friendship concluded between those who are old enemies. The *fourth* book entitled 'Loss of what has been acquired'(அர்த்த நாசம்) contains the story of the Monkey and the Crocodile. It points out how fools can be made by flattery to part with their possessions. The *fifth* book called 'Inconsiderate action' (அசம்பிரேக்ஷிய காரித்துவம்) contains a number of stories illustrating the evils resulting from nonattention to all the circumstances of a case.

"The book is pervaded by a quaint humour which transfers to the animal kingdom all sorts of human action. Thus, animals devote themselves to the study of the Vedas and to the practice of religious rites. They engage in disquisitions about god, saints and heroes or exchange views regarding subtle rules of Ethics; but suddenly their fierce animal nature breaks out (1)". The story of the pious Cat that was called upon to act as umpire is an example of this. The story of the conceited musical Donkey is very humourous.

The Panchatantram was written in Tamil first in the metrical form by one Veera-mardha-thanda Devar. Though the poem is in a very easy style, it has not been much read; hence arose the need of a prose Panchatantram. We shall

---

(1) History of the Sanskrit Literature. Prof. Macdonell.

here enumerate the chief characteristics of this prose work. (1) The inculcation of moral principles is the primary object of the work. (2) The way in which the stories are interwoven and made to bear relation to the thread of the main story is very admirable. (3) In the various dialogues that take place, we notice judgment based upon profound reasoning. (4) Common-place sayings are introduced very skilfully here and there; and there is an astonishing command of Tamil proverbs and idioms in their right places. In the small book on வெப்தறானி alone, there are more than 20 proverbs and common sayings. (5) The great charm of the book is the constant play of wit and humour. (6) A masterly style is noticeable throughout the book. It is simple, it is grammatical, it is elegant and it is dignified. The free unaffected movement coupled with clear distinctness is remarkable. (7) There is an intelligent choice of Tamil and Sanskrit words. (8) There is the variety of expression specially prominent; and, (9) The peculiar characteristic of this book is that its style gets more and more difficult, by slow degrees; until in the last book we have a fairly difficult style.

Dr. Caldwell writes, "In the present century an entirely new style of composition has appeared viz, good collquial prose, which, through the spread of European influences, seems likely to have a struggle for the mastery with Poetry in the Tamil literature of the future. The name of the father of this species of composition (in so far as Tamilians are concerned) deserves to be remembered. It was Tandavaraya Mudaliyar, at one time a teacher in the college of Madras. To him we are indebted for the Tamil prose version of the Pancha-tantra, and, through the influence of his example, for versions of the Ramayana, the Maha-Bharata, &c., in the same style of flowing and elegant, yet perfectly intelligible prose(1)". This prose version of the Panchatantram is an excellent work in all respects and we are sure

1. Dr. Caldwell's Comparative Grammar, P. 150.

that it will ever continue to be a fountain of pleasure to the learned and the unlearned, and to the young and the old.

15. Arumukha Navalar:

"வில்லூர் மாட மிகக்கொடு பொலியு, நல்லூர் வாழ்க்கை நயந் தரு ளறிஞன், * * * நீற்றொடு கண்மணிநிறையப் பூண்யார்ப், போற்றொடு பொலியும் புண்ணிய புருட, னவ நெறி யாய வனைத்துங் களைந்து,சிவநெறி வளர்க்குந் திப்பிய குணத்த, னெழுத்து முதலாக வியம்பிலக் கிணமும், வழுத்திலக் கியமும் வரம்புகண் டெழுந்தோன், சமயம் விசேடம் தருநிரு வாணமென், றமையுமுத் தீக்கையு மடைவுறப் பெற்றோன், சுமங்கல விசேடச் சுருதியா மூலா, கமங்களின் முப்பொருள் கருதுபெ ரருளான், யுத்தியி னமைத்துணர்ந் தோங்கனு பூதி, சித்தியுற் றமைந்த சிவ சிந் தாமணி, கற்றுணர் புலவருட் களிக்கு, மூற்றுண ராறு முகநா வலனே." ——**மகாவித்துவான் மீநாட்சிசுந்தரம் பிள்ளை.**
(திருக்கோவையார், நாவலர் பதிப்பு. சிறப்புப் பாயிரம்.)

Arumukha Navalar was born at Nallur in Jaffna in 1823 A. D. In his youth he underwent a regular course of instruction. He was first taught Arithmetic; he then studied Nigandu, Nidatham, Bharatam, and Kanda-puranam. He was for some time learning English also under the Rev. Peter Percival of Jaffna who, admiring his scholarship in Tamil, soon made him his Tamil Pandit. In compliance with Rev. Percival's request, he prepared a correct edition of the Tamil prose version of the Bible. Before he was 20 years old, he studied all the Saiva Siddhanta Philosophical works, besides Devaram, Tiruvachakam &c. From his 24th. year he commenced his habit of delivering lectures on Saivaism and at Tiruvavaduthurai, His Holiness the then Pandara Sannidhigal conferred upon him the title of Navalar in great admiration of his ability as a lecturer. He established two schools (Vidya Salai) one at Chidambaram and the other at Vannar-pannai (in Jaffna), were young pupils are even now being taught Tamil with the special intent of making them understand the truth and value of

the Saiva system of religion. In 1867, while he was at Madras, he was in the habit of delivering lectures, every friday, on Saivaism. His lectures were very well-attended and the benign influence they infused in the minds of the audience was strikingly remarkable. Navalar had one printing-press of his own known as Vidyanupalana yandra salai. The books he printed are Soundarya Lagari, Nigandu, Tirukkural, Tarkka Sangraham, Setu-puranam, Ilakkanakkotturai, Prayoga viveka, Periapuranam, Kandapuranam and several other works. The following are the works which he printed with his commentaries : (1) Koil-puranam (2) Nannul (Kandigai) (3) Saiva Samaya Neri (4) Vakkundam, Nalvari, Nanneri &c. He wrote also prose versions of Periapuranam, Kandapuranam, Tiruvilayadal puranam &c ; and, for beginners, he wrote the 4 parts of Bala-padam and the 2 parts of Saiva Vina Vidai. He was a great prose writer. The characteristic feature of his prose style is clearness. Even when he writes on philosophical topics, his style has the same simple elegance and clearness. Here is a specimen of his style. Speaking of 'அன்பு' (kindness, love) he says "அன்பானது, குடத்துள் விளக்கும் உறையுள் வாளும் போல ஒருவர் காட்டக் காணற் பாலதன்று; அவ்வன்புடைமையால் வெளிப்படும் செயல்களைக் கண்டவழி, இவை உண்மையால் இங்கே அன்பு உண்டென்று அநுமித்துக் கொள்ளற் பாலதாம். 'அன்பிற்கு முண்டோ அடைக்குந்தா ழார்வலர்-புன்கணீர் பூசல் தரும்' என்னுந் திருக்குறளானு முணர்க". (குசனம், பெரியபுராணம் செய்யுள், P.128). Navalar was a bachelor throughout his life-time. In his travels between Jaffna and Madras, he visited almost all the sacred shrines of South India. *Mahalingaiyar* who wrote the small treatise on grammar for beginners and *Ramalinga Swamigal*, the writer of (1) Manu-murai-Kanda Vasagam–an excellent, beautiful, little prose work and (2) Jeevakarunya Orukkam—were his contemporaries. Navalar was an intimate friend of the great poet Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai.

After his 50th. year, he began to lose his health. He quietly spent his last days (in Jaffna) in prayer and meditation; and in his 56th. year [Dec. 1879] he freed himself from this mortal coil and took shelter beneath His Holy Feet(1). Our Tamil Land lost in him a great prose writer, an excellent lecturer and a noble-hearted and true patron of Saivaism and Tamil Literature.

> "He is gone who seem'd so great,
> Gone; but nothing can bereave him
> Of the force he made his own
> Being here."

We now reach the prose of times so near to us of which the estimates are so often not only personal but personal with passion. Hence, we shall here note merely the authors and their respective works without venturing any remarks favourable or unfavourable. We shall not speak anything about the living authors. (1) The veteran scholar **Damodaram Pillai** (1832—1901) wrote Chulamani (prose), besides his introductions to Virasoliyam, Kalittogai &c. He did great good by his valuable editions of Tolkappiyam, Virasoliyam, Irayanar Agapporul, Ilakkana-Vilakkam, Kalittogoi, Thanikaippuranam &c. (2) **Prof. Sundaram Pillai** (1853—1897) was the writer of a prose work entitled 'An Introduction to Science' (நூற்றொகை விளக்கம்). His death was a great loss both to literature and historical research. (3) **Sabapathi Navalar** (d. 1903) was the writer of 'Dravidap-prakasikai' (திராவிடப் பிரகாசிகை) a valuable History of the Tamil Literature, and, lastly, (4) **V. G. Suryanarayana Sastriar** (1873—1903 A.D.) was the writer of a History of the Tamil Language, besides a classical novel entitled 'Mathivanan' and other works of poetry, prose, and drama.

Recent years have witnessed a very rapid out-growth of the Tamil Prose Literature. Novels and Dramas are increasing rapidly in number; Histories, Biographies

---

(1) From a Tamil metrical biography of Navalar.

and Translations from select English works are also slowly creeping in; Journals, almost all written in a flawless style, are being published. The best among these is the 'Sen-Tamil' published monthly by the present Madura Tamil Sangam which is a great boon to our Literature; thus every effort is being made to up-lift and ennoble our Literature; and we hope, that in the course of a few years, we shall see the Tamil Literature as remarkable for its Prose as for its Poetry.

"There's a good time coming yet,
A good time coming;
The proper impulse has been given,—
Wait a little longer."

CHAPTER III.

The Leading Characteristics of the Tamil Prose Diction.

It is of supreme importance to consider here the essential characteristics of a good Tamil prose style. We have seen that the best Tamil Prose work is the Panchatantram; we find in it a happy choice of expression, a good selection of vocabulary and grammatical correctness. Now, we shall see what the chief features are; (1) 'The needful qualities for a fit Prose are regularity, uniformity, precision, balance'(1). The balance of style is noticeable in Nachchinarkkiniyar's commentary on Chintamani. (2) Prose diction should be distinct from colloquial diction; and it requires a moderate elevation. 'Poetry soars, prose moves upon the ground; it moves with dignity but it does not spurn the ground'(2). It must be remembered that there are degrees and shades of elevation according to the condition of the writer, the subject and the occasion. This peculiar dignity of style may be noticed in Sivagnana Yogigal's prose. (3) "Much of the charm of good prose is

(1) Matthew Arnold. Essays in criticism. P. 39.
(2) John Earle's English Prose. P. 153.

due to mere explicitness. "Evidentia in narratione' says Quintilian,'est quidem magna virtus'—clearness in statement is certainly a great quality."(1) This principal virtue has been much overlooked by some of the modern prose-writers. It is the lucidity of style that greatly contributes to the simple charm and excellence of Arumukha Navalar's prose. (4) Another essential element of good diction is 'variation which should pervade every part, words, phrases, idioms, sentences.' This is the outstanding characteristic which contributes to the excellence and pleasantness of the Panchatantram. Mere adherence to this rule, without proper care or skill will mar the perspicuity of the style. (5) The choice of expression is a pretty difficult art to acquire; and it holds a prominent place in writing Tamil, since our language has a copious vocabulary. Dr. Caldwell writes, "The extraordinary copiousness of the Tamil vocabulary is shown by the fact that a school lexicon of the Tamil language published by the American Missionaries at Jaffna, contains no less than 58,500 words; notwithstanding which, it would be necessary to add several thousands of technical terms, besides provincialisms, and thousands upon thousands of authorised compounds in order to render the list complete."(2) Tamil words, wherever possible, should be preferred to Sanskrit words. A prose passage, where Sanskrit words are conspicuous by their absence, will be exceedingly sweet and homely; e. g. the sentence 'வானவர் பூ மழை பொழிந்தார்' is more homely and pleasing than the sentence 'தேவர்கள் புஷ்ப வர்ஷம் வருஷித்தார்.' So long as the meaning of a sentence is not rendered obscure, we may freely use Tamil words. (6) It is necessary for a writer to learn to appreciate the various colours and shades of words. To write good Tamil Prose, one ought to be in complete touch with the Tamil vocabulary and have experience of literature and life, of hearing, reading,

(1) John Earle's English Prose. P. 153.
(2) Dr. Caldwell's Comparative Grammar pp. 81-5.

writing; in fact, all these should guide one; else, it will lead one to ridiculous results. We have heard of a Western scholar who tried to speak Tamil with the help of the English-Tamil dictionary; when he had to order his servant to 'put the things in the sun,' he said to him 'போடு அந்தகாரியத்தை அந்த சூரியனில்'! (7) We should take care to use the right word in the right place. There are words 'which are not so entirely equivalent that they may be used indifferently and at hap-hazard;' e. g. the words கோபம் and சினம், ought not to be used indiscriminately nor are the words பகைமை and செற்றம். There is a slight difference in their meanings; Nachchinarkkiniyar defines கோபம் and சினம், பகைமை and செற்றம் thus:—"கோபத்தின் பின்னுக் சிறிதுபொழுது நிற்பது சினம், கோபம் நீட்டித்து நிற்கின்றது சினம்; பகைமை நெடுங்காலம் நிகழ்வது செற்றம்";-Enmity and Rancour. (பத்துப்பாட்டு உரை, pp. 23, 88)., (8) Unusual words should be shunned 'as as a ship would shun a reef.' We should not use in ordinary prose, such unusual words as கள்வன் in the sense of நண்டு, வேழம் in the sense of கொறுக் காந்தட்டை &c. (9) Sober words should be chosen in preference to those which are elevated; in ordinary prose we should not write e. g. அன்னோன் முன்னாதர்ப் படர்ந்தனன் where we can write in the simpler form அவன் முன் வழியிற் சென்றான். (10) The coining of new words will enrich our vocabulary; but it is not easy to produce satisfactory examples of novelty. "Words, like other tools, wear out (as Horace said) and new ones are wanted to keep the language going."(1) This truth was perceived by Tolkappiyar himself. He says 'Novelty ought not to be condemned; it is admissible' ("கடிசொல் லில்லைக் காலத்துப் படினே")(2.) Pavananthiar is more explicit. He has 'பழையன கழிதலும் புதியன புகுதலும், வழுவல கால வகையி னானே.' Old things which have once been pleasing lose their popularity and are cast aside; new things make their appearance and are taken up. We shall give here one

(1) John Earle's English Prose. P. 156. (2) எச்சவியல் 56. Tolk.

illustration of each. i. The expression 'குதிரைச்சேவல்' was once ordinarily used to denote the male among horses. In Tolkappiyam we have 'குரங்கி னேற்றினைக் கடுவ னென்றலும், ... குதிரையு ளாணினைச் சேவ லென்றலும், ... முடிய வந்த வவ்வழக் குண்மையிற், கடிய லாகா கடனறிந் தோர்க்கே;' in his commentary, Nachchinarkkiniyar writes 'குதிரையைச் சேவலென்றல் இக்காலத் தரிதாயிற்று.'(1.) ii. Here is an illustration of novelty. The letter ச was not originally used as an initial letter;(2) but, afterwards, such words as சட்டை, சமழ்ப்பு crept in; and the commentators give these words as examples of novelty (452nd. Sutram Etymology) and they remark 'அவை பிற்காலத்துத் தோன்றிய சொல்லெனபால்'. There are instances of word-coining e. g. the term உளநூல் for psychology, உயிர்நூல் for biology &c. The expression 'கட்டுரைத் தொகுதி' may be taken as an example of word-revival. (11) Special attention must be paid to Tamil idioms; 'துள்ளித்துள்ள முட்டுமாம் கிழ்'— here we have an example of a Tamil idiom. (12) An accurate study of the Tamil Grammar is very essential; for, it is grammar that helps us in understanding the nature of words and the manner of their usage. (13) Punctuation, and the paragraph system must be adopted, since their usage greatly helps the reader. (14) The introduction of foreign words, wherever necesssary, should be freely allowed. Some of the Hindustani words like சலாம்(3) சபாச்,(4) ராவுத்தன்(5) have already found place in standard works. English words are also creeping in. A growing language cannot but take up

---

(1) மரபியல், 68. Tolk. (2) எழுத்ததிகாரம். 62 சூத்திரம்.

(3) குறவர் மகட்குச் சலாமிடற் கேக்கறு, குமரனை முத்துக் குமாரனைப் போற்றுதும்-குமரகுருபரர்.

(4) 'சித்தர் விஞ்சையர் மாகர் சபாசென'-திருப்புகழ்-அருணகிரிநாதர்.

(5) 'முதுகூளித்திரள்...டிண்டிண் டெனக்கொட்டி யாட வெஞ் சூர்க்கொன்ற ராவுத்தனே.' கந்தரலங்காரம். அருணகிரிநாதர்.

words and expressions from other languages with which it comes in daily contact. (15) The 'Limitation of Sandhi' also deserves our attention. If 'Sandhi' were to be used at all places arbitrarily, the lucidity of the style is sure to be destroyed; for instance the sentence, செங்கோனடாத்து மரசர் குடிகளினின்னனீக்கு மருமுறைகளை நாடுவார்,presents roughness both to the eye and to the ear; but if we just break up the Sandhis and write செங்கோல் நடாத்தும் அரசர் குடிகளின் இன்னல் நீக்கும் அருமுறைகளை நாடுவார், we find the meaning clear. (16) The study of Philology must be encouraged. "This at least is certain that Philology is one of those studies which must be taken into account in a treatise which has Prose for its scope, because it is one of the instruments whereby a man's mind may be made better acquainted with the material out of which Prose is constructed."(1) Philology is an interesting subject in many respects. It reveals to us old custom; e. g. (1) The words 'இடும்பை,' 'பையுள்' (sorrow, affliction) have an interesting origin. Originally, criminals were punished thus:—they were let into a sack; the mouth of the sack was tightly closed; and the sack was then rolled on thorny grounds. Hence இடும்பை (இடும்+பை)and பையுள் (பை+உள்) have had their origin from the sack(பை) and signify pain or suffering.

The word 'சுவர்' for 'wall' has also an interesting derivation. Houses (in the Tamil Land) are built on certain principles of structure and the names of the human organs are given to the various structures of the building. Tamil Poets often compare our body to a nest, and the soul to the bird that rests in it; the word புக்கில் has both meanings (1) house and (2) body. Our legs support the body while standing; the pillars of a house correspond to our legs; hence, the word 'கால்' signifies (1) leg and (2) pillar. Again, it is the cross-beam which, like our arm, can bear weight. Hence, the cross beam is known by the name of

(1) John Earle's English Prose. P. 114.

'கை;' 'கைகள்' means cross beams, rafters. The entrance of a house correspands to our mouth and is called 'வாய்' (வாயில்=வாய் + இல், இல்=house+வாய்=entrance). The windows of a house correspond to our eyes-the organ of vision; குறுங்கண் is used in the sense of 'window' cf. 'கோலச் சாளரக் குறுங்க ணுழைந்து,வண்டொடு புக்க மணவாய்த் தென்றல்.'(1) The upper-part of the shoulders and the arms bear weight; similarly the walls and beams support weight; hence 'walls' have been called 'சுவர்' from 'சுவல்' which means 'the upper part of the shoulder' e. g. 'சுவன்மிசை யமைத்த கையன்:'(2) Hence we clearly see that Philology deserves the greatest attention of a Tamil Student; and (17) The Tamil Student must have unbiassed views concerning hings old and new. Let him bear in mindthe wise advice given in Sivaprakasam-(கஉ)"தொன்மையவாமெனு மெவையு நன்றாகா; இன்று தோன்றியநூ லெனுமெவையுந் தீதாகா."('Everything old is not necessarily good and everything newis notnecessarily false)'

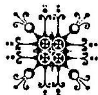
Conclusion.

In the course of our dissertation we noticed that the Tamil Prose Literature began not with commentaries as is usually believed, but with regular prose passages interspersed in considerable poetical compositions; next, prose came to be used in commentaries; it was used by the Jains in their Manipravala works; it may also be noted here that thecommentaries on the Vaishnavite religious works(வ்யாக்யானம்) were also written in the Manipravala style. Later on, Prose was used in criticisms and philosophical disquisitions, and lastly, prose has been used in Stories, Translations &c. The exclusive attention hitherto paid to the branch of Poetry is slowly giving way and, now, scholars who, in addition to their love for their mother-tongue, have had the western culture, devote their time and attention for the development of the Tamil Literature by supplying its two wants,(1)in its sphere of Drama and(2)in its sphere of Prose.

(1) சிலப்பதிகாரம்.2. காதை. 23-24.(2) நெடுநல்வாடை. L. 183

The Tamil Language has been, for the last two or three decades, slowly gaining high appreciation at the hands of Western scholars. "Wherever approbation falls there we cannot help recognising merit" says Martineau; and our literature has received the highest approbation from various quarters. We shall quote two authors who understood the high excellence of Tamil. Abel Hovelacque writes thus, "Dravidian Literature is particularly rich in moral poems and in collections of wise saws and aphorisms, which constitute the most ancient monuments of Tamil Poetry. But in any case the Tamil Literature remains the most copious, the most fruitful, the most interesting, and, at the same time, the most ancient."(1) William Dwight Whitney writes, "the author has been informed by an American who was born in Southern India and grew up to speak its language vernacularly along with his English, a man of high education and unusual gifts as a preacher and writer that he esteemed the Tamil a finer language to think and speak in than any European tongue known to him."(2)

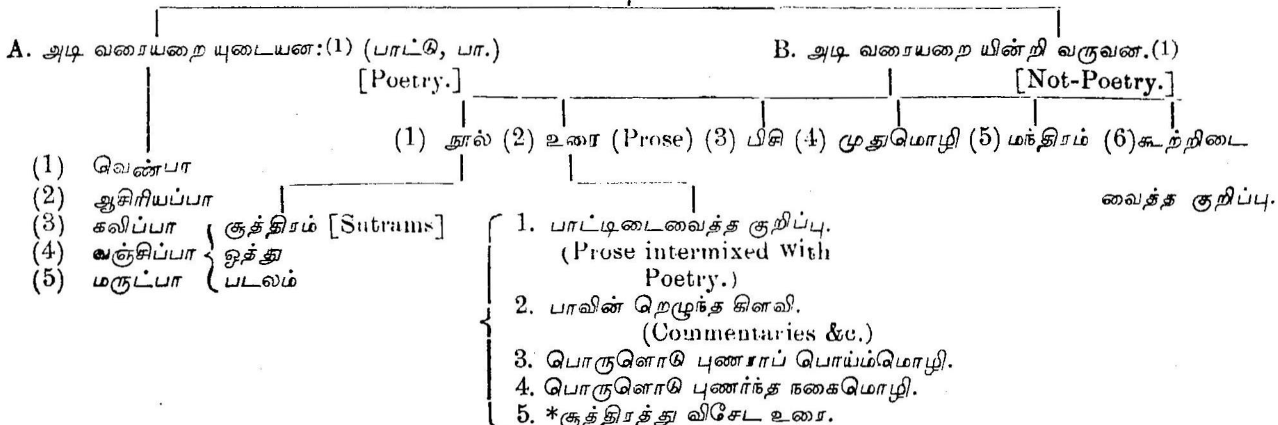
When our Tamil Literature is so much praised in spite of its two wants (Prose and Drama), we have every reason to hope that, if these wants are made up and if proper attention be concentrated on such principles as are calculated to promote the development of Prose Literature, we shall soon be in possession of a rich supply of fresh materials and our Literature will 'combine in it all that is best and purest in the literature of the West and in the ancient literature of the East and will, in the words of the Poet, be "*A thing of Beauty and a Joy for ever:*"(3)



(1) "The Science of Language.' p. 88. (2) 'Life and Growth of Language' p. 244. (3) Introduction to Kalavati.

ILLUSTRATION.

The place given to Prose in Tolkappiyam.



• (1) Vide Sutrams 476; 477, 478 & 486. Porul Adhikaram 477. சூ. 'எழுநிலத் தெழுந்த செய்யுட் டெரியி, னடிவரை யிலலன வாறென மொழிப.' 467. சூ. 'அவைதாம், நூலினுன......குறிப்பினுன.' 486. சூ. 'பாட்டிடைவைத்த...... உரைவகை நடையே நான்கென மொழிப.'

* Vide மரபியல் 659. சூத்திரம்.

ADDENDUM, I.

வெண்பா.

1. சீரார் தமிழ்மொழியுந் தெண்டிரையு மொக்குமென்ப
நேரா முவமை நிகழ்த்துவமால்—(1) காரார்
கலிபயக்குஞ் செம்பொருள்கள் காமர் தமிழின்
கலைபயக்குஞ் செம்பொருள்கள் காண்.

தரவுகொச்சகக்கலிப்பா.

2. (2) அருந்தமிழி னமுதன்ன இலக்கணமைஐ வகையென்ப
இருந்திரைசேர் சலதிதரு மின்னமுது மைந்தென்ப [போற்
(3) பெருந்தகைமைத் தமிழ்ப்பொருளும்பேராழிமறைபொருள்
றிருந்தியநுண் ணறிவினுக்கு மெட்டாது திகழுமன்றே.

கட்டளைக்கலித்துறை.

3. (4) மல்லன் மலையன்ன மாதவத் தோன்பண்டு வாரிதியின்
சொல்லுஞ் சுவைபோற் றமிழின் சுவையையுந் துய்த்தறிந்தான்
(5) எல்லை யிலாக்கடன் முந்நீ ரெனும்பெயர்த் தின்றமிழும்
நல்லறி ஞோர்புகழ் முத்தமிழ்ப் பேரா னலமுறுமே.

கலிநிலைத்துறை:

4. (6) பொலமு லாங்கட றன்னுள்வா ழுயிர்களைப் போற்றி
நலமெ லாந்தரு மாறுநற் றமிழ்மொழி நன்கு
புலமு லாமனச் செல்வரைப் போற்றிடும் ; புகலின்
பலமி லாவகை செயுநவை யுண்டொன்று பறைவாம்.

அறுசீர்க் கழிநெடிலடியாசிரிய விருத்தம்.

5. (7) சலதிக் குற்ற பெருங்குறைவு தாகா நலத்தைத் தணியாமை
பலதிக் குற்ற தமிழ்க்குறைவு பண்பார் வசன நூலின்மை
*கலதிக் குற்ற பிறப்பகமாங் †கடலைத் திருத்த விசையா ‡இஃ
திலதிக்குற்ற தமிழ்மொழிக்கே! யின்னூல் கற்றோர்க் கிசையு
மன்றே.

---

* கலதிக்கு + உற்ற + பிறப்பகம்='மூதேவியின் பிறப்பிடம்.'

† "தேம்புனலை நீர்க்கடலுஞ் சென்றுதர வின்றே" சிந்தா-
காந்தரு. - ௩௫௬.

‡ இஃது=(இக்குறைபாடு) + இலது + இக்கு + உற்ற + தமிழ்
மொழிக்கு. உற்ற-உவமவாசகம், ''செப்புற்ற கொங்கை'' என்புழிப்
போல.

ADDENDUM, II.

கலிவிருத்தம்.

தக்க வெள்ளலின் ளூன மெங்கனு
மிக்க பொற்கலன் விற்கு நாட்டினே
யிக்கு மானுக மின்ற மிழ்ப்பரப்
பொக்கு மென்னலா முண்மை நாடிடின். (1)

என்ன ணம்மெனி விரணி யக்கலன்
மன்னர் செல்வரே வாங்கும் ஆற்றலர்
துன்னும் ஏழையர் சொல்லு மட்கலன்
இன்மை யிற்பிற தேய மெய்துவர். (2)

அன்ன வண்ணமே அருந்த மிழ்க்கணே
வன்னப் பாக்களே மல்கி யுண்மையின்
துன்னு பண்டிதர் தோமென் றுன்னலர்
மன்னு பாமரர் வசன மின்மையின், (3)

செந்த மிழ்ச்சுவை சிறிது மோர்ந்திலர்
நந்தம் பாஷையில் நாட்டம் வைத்திலர்
சொந்த மாகவே சோர்வி லாங்கிலத்
தந்த நாடியே அவல மாற்றுவர். (4)

வேறு.

ஆத விற்றமி ழின்சுவை யார்ந்தநற்
போத மிக்கவர் போற்றிவ சனநூல்
ஏத மில்பல என்றுமி யற்றியத்
தீதி லாவகை செய்து திகழ்வரே. (5)

